

## Sentence Fragments

**DEFINITION:** Sentence fragments are pieces of sentences that are missing either a main subject or a verb.

### IDENTIFY AND UNDERLINE THE FRAGMENTS BELOW.

1. Ultimately, I could not meet my professor's expectations for the course.  
Stubbornly disengaging from class discussions and refusing to complete course readings.
2. Even if Kinkade's paintings are idyllic creations with no reference to past or present reality. Kinkade developed a method to visually represent nostalgia in a way that appeals to his viewers.
3. Particularly cold Arctic and Antarctic winds evaporating water molecules in ocean water. Leaving highly concentrated salt water behind.

**HAVING TROUBLE?** If you cannot identify which groups of words are fragments, reviewing independent and dependent clauses will help you better identify fragments.

### Understanding Independent and Dependent Clauses

**DEFINITION:** A clause contains a subject and a verb, but not all clauses can stand alone. There are two types of clauses: independent clauses and dependent clauses.

### IDENTIFY WHICH CLAUSES ARE INDEPENDENT AND WHICH ARE DEPENDENT:

1. She is a hardworking individual.  
A. Independent  
B. Dependent
2. Although we never confirmed the date.  
A. Independent  
B. Dependent
3. Once the media picks up on this story.  
A. Independent  
B. Dependent

**HAVING TROUBLE?** Let's take a closer look at independent and dependent clauses.

**DEFINITION:** An independent clause contains a subject and a verb and can stand alone as a sentence.

**EXAMPLE:** I think we should try that new Thai restaurant tonight.

## TO JOIN TWO INDEPENDENT CLAUSES, USE A COMMA AND A COORDINATING CONJUNCTION.

**EXAMPLE:** I think we should try that new Thai restaurant tonight, and I'll buy your meal.

**EXERCISE:** Add a coordinating conjunction and a comma to combine these independent clauses.

1. My mother-in-law is visiting tomorrow. I have a dentist appointment at 2:00 p.m.
2. She prefers to relax and shop when she visits. She won't mind that I have an appointment.
3. Sana praised her brother's efforts. She bought him an ice cream cone to celebrate his new endeavor.

**DEFINITION:** A dependent clause contains a subject and a verb and begins with a subordinating conjunction (although, even though, whenever, before, once, since, etc.). Dependent clauses cannot stand alone and are not complete sentences.

**EXAMPLE:** Even though we never go out to eat on weeknights...

## USE A COMMA TO JOIN A DEPENDENT AND AN INDEPENDENT CLAUSE TOGETHER TO MAKE A COMPLEX SENTENCE.

**EXAMPLE:** Even though we never go out to eat on weeknights, I think we should try that new Thai restaurant tonight.

**EXERCISE: ADD COMMAS TO JOIN THE DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT CLAUSES.**

1. While you bake the bread I will marinate the tempeh.
2. If your fever does not decrease by this evening you should go to the doctor.
3. Although I enjoy contemporary sculpture I sometimes struggle to interpret the installations.

**HAVING TROUBLE?** Perhaps you understand that dependent clauses cannot be complete sentences and that they begin with subordinating conjunctions like although, even though, whenever, etc., but you are still struggling to understand the difference between a subject and verb. The information below should help you.

### Understanding Subjects and Verbs

**DEFINITION:** Sentences are made up of subjects and verbs. Nearly every sentence must have both a subject and a verb to be complete.

**THE SUBJECT OF THE SENTENCE IS THE PERSON, PLACE, THING, OR IDEA THAT IS DOING OR BEING SOMETHING.**

**THE SUBJECTS IN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES ARE UNDERLINED:**

My mother won the lottery.

After midnight, he falls asleep.

My favorite animal is the polar bear.

**UNDERLINE THE SUBJECTS IN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES:**

Surprisingly, the Martians appeared friendly and cooperative.

The banker wore a fashionable vest.

Worried about finding employment, Sarah wondered if she should admit that she had once committed a felony.

Thus, the doctor concluded that Michael was allergic to penicillin.

Several students have requested clarification from Professor Doyle.

Disillusioned, Beatrice no longer attended church.

We travelled nine hundred miles in less than fifteen hours.

The irritable, fidgety crowd waited impatiently for the rally speeches to begin.

After her bat mitzvah, Elaine had a long and pleasant conversation with her grandmother.

The timber wolf looks like a large German shepherd.

**THE VERB DESCRIBES THE ACTION OR STATE OF BEING TAKEN BY THE SUBJECT.**

**THE VERBS THAT MODIFY THE SUBJECTS ARE BOLDED:**

My mother **won** the lottery.

After midnight, he **falls** asleep.

My favorite animal **is** the polar bear.

**CIRCLE THE VERBS IN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES:**

Who goes there?

Relatively inexpensive, the shampoo softens my coarse hair.

She thinks about her ex-boyfriend too much.

Talking to my sister usually calms me down.

Snoring softly, the baby smiled.

After the dinner party, the three friends visited Ashley.

Why should students pay the consequences for legislators' irresponsible decisions?

While dancing at a concert, Harry stubbed his toe.

The generous man offered Emily \$700.00 for her antique chair.

"Please hurry," Sarah added.

**PRACTICE:** Knowing that sentences need an independent clause (a subject and a verb without a subordinating conjunction) to survive, change the following fragments into complete sentences:

1. Assuming Haddock's arguments about ancient depictions on serving vessels are well-founded.
2. After the government enacts stricter laws regulating industrial waste.
3. Usually associated with thunderstorms in warm weather.
4. Whenever professors ask students break into small groups.
5. Despite the fact that first-year students traditionally do not undertake substantive research projects, Professor Allan.
6. Deciphering the final project's technological component.
7. Resulted in academic probably after barely two years.
8. Two of the most supportive people in my life, my best friend Alex and her elderly grandmother, Dorothy.
9. Among the greatest painters of all time.
10. Our visit to Paris was wonderful. Even though we were not able to visit the Louvre.