

ADVERB CLAUSES

English Language Learner

DEFINITION

A dependent clause that functions as an adverb.

Begins with a subordinator that expresses the relationship between the adverb clause and the independent clause.

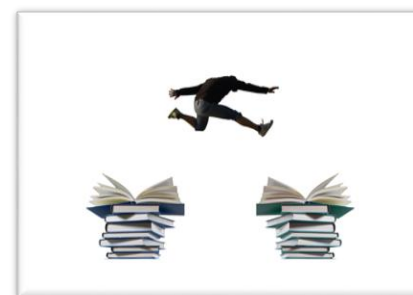
The adverb clause will indicate *when, where, why, how, how long, how far, how often, for what purpose* and *contrast*.

The punctuation of an adverb clause is determined by the order of the **independent clause (IC)** and **dependent clause (DC)**.

IC + DC **DC + IC**

NOTE: There are exceptions to the general rule.

after	<i>After the jobs were vacated, the company closed its division.</i> [later]
*since	<i>Work schedules changed since the business prompted flexibility.</i> [from that time] [not a reason subordinator]
*as	<i>As I was leaving the work site, the fire alarm went off.</i> [at the same time]
before	<i>Before the people immigrated to Canada, they suffered hardship.</i> [earlier]
until	<i>She worked mornings until her child went to school all day.</i> [up to that time]



KINDS OF ADVERB CLAUSES

(1) TIME CLAUSE

Indicates when the action described in the *independent clause* took place.

Subordinator	Example
when	<i>When students study, they also boost their confidence.</i> [specific time]
whenever	<i>Whenever the transportation system fails, the public suffer.</i> [at any time]
*while	<i>The instructor corrected papers while the students reviewed.</i> [at the same time]
as soon as	<i>As soon as the company reverted its policy, staff were relaxed.</i> [soon after]

(2) PLACE CLAUSE

Indicates where the action described by the main verb took place.

Subordinator	Example
where	<i>Most students buy where it is the cheapest.</i> [specific place]
wherever	<i>Most businesses recruit wherever they can.</i> [any place]
everywhere	<i>Students can learn everywhere they work.</i> [every place]
anywhere	<i>Anywhere you travel, you hear politics.</i> [any place]

(3) DISTANCE CLAUSE

Indicates how far.

Subordinator	Example
as + ADVERB + as	<i>The recruiters traveled as far as they could to advertise the university program.</i>

(4) FREQUENCY CLAUSE

Indicates how often.

Subordinator	Example
as + ADVERB + as	<i>The students do not study as often as they should.</i>

(5) MANNER CLAUSE

Indicates how often.

Subordinator	Example
as	<i>The business hired one hundred new engineers as human resources recommended.</i>
as + ADVERB + as	<i>The business hired the engineers as quickly as it could to avoid delays in their projects.</i>
*as if/as though (formal)	<i>The department looks as if/as though it is busy based on the number of new employees.</i>
*like (informal)	<i>The department looks like it is busy based on the number of new employees.</i>

AS IF/ AS THOUGH

In very formal written English, the verb takes the same form as it does in conditional sentences when the information in the as if/as though clause is untrue (or probably untrue).

However, many English speakers use normal verb forms in this situation.

FORMAL: *The new employee acts **as if** he **were** the manager.*

INFORMAL: *The new employee acts **as if** he **is** the manager.*

(6) REASON CLAUSE

Indicates why.

Subordinator	Example
because	<i>Because I did not do well on the entrance exam, I need to apply again.</i>
*since	<i>Since I got here, I have done little work.</i> [reason clause NOT time clause]
*as	<i>As the tuition fee rises, most international students do not register.</i> [reason clause NOT time clause]
now that	<i>Now that I have a GPS, I never get lost.</i>



(7) RESULT CLAUSE

Shows the effect or consequence of the information located in the independent clause.

Subordinator	Example
so +{adjective/adverb} + that	<i>The business was so prosperous that it hired 100 new employees.</i> <i>The projects arrived so quickly that the business hired 100 new employees.</i>
such (an/a) + {noun} + that	<i>The business was such a success that it hired 100 new employees.</i>
so much + {noun} + that	<i>The company was consumed with so much conflict that it laid off 50 employees.</i>
so many + {noun} + that	<i>The business was consumed with so many project that it hired 100 new employees.</i>
so little + {noun} + that	<i>The company had so little work that it had layoffs.</i>
so few + {noun} + that	<i>The business had so few jobs that there were layoffs.</i>

(8) PURPOSE CLAUSE

Indicates the purpose of the action.

Modals (may, might, can, could, will, would, have to) usually occur in a purpose clause.

To emphasize the purpose clause, writers can place the purpose clause at the beginning of the sentence.

Subordinator	Example
so that	<i>I am putting on my glasses so that I can read the menu.</i> <i>We studied hard so that we would do well on the exam.</i> <i>Max moved to the front of the classroom so that he could see better.</i>
in order that [formal]	<i>The teacher moved Max to the front of the room in order that he could see the Smartboard.</i> <i>In order that Max could see the Smartboard, the teacher moved him to the front of the room.</i>

NOTE:

In order that: When **subjects of both IC and DC are the same**, use **in order to + base verb** OR **to + base verb**.

EXAMPLES:

Max moved to the front of the room **in order that he** could see the Smartboard.

- Max moved to the front of the room **in order to see** the Smartboard.
- Max moved to the front of the board **to see** the Smartboard.

Businesses use headhunters **in order that they** save time and money.

- Businesses use headhunters **in order to save** time and money.
- Businesses use headhunters **to save** time and money.

(9) DIRECT OPPOSITION CLAUSE

Indicates the direct contrast.

Subordinators are used interchangeably,

Use a comma between the **independent clause** and the **dependent clause** regardless of the order.

Subordinator	Example
whereas	<i>Ontario citizens have access to a rail system</i> , whereas <i>Newfoundlanders do not.</i> <i>Whereas</i> <i>Newfoundlanders do not have access to a rail systems</i> , <i>Ontario citizens do.</i>
while	<i>Ontario citizens have access to a rail system</i> , while <i>Newfoundlanders do not.</i> <i>While</i> <i>Newfoundlanders do not have access to a rail systems</i> , <i>Ontario citizens do.</i>

(10) CONDITIONAL CLAUSE

Indicates a condition for a result to occur or not occur.

Subordinator	Example
if	<i>If you prepare all semester</i> , <i>you will increase your chances of success on the final examination.</i> <i>You will increase your chances of success on the final examination</i> <i>if you prepare all semester.</i>
unless	<i>Unless you prepare all semester</i> , <i>you will not increase your chances of success on the final examination.</i> <i>You will not increase your chances of success on the final examination</i> <i>unless you prepare all semester.</i>

REFERENCES

Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2014). *Longman Academic Writing Series* (5th ed., pp. 221-240). Pearson Education.

Quitman Troyka, L., & Hesse, D. (2006). *Simon & Shuster Handbook for Writers* (4th ed., pp. 176-177). Pearson.



Contact us

Writing Centre
 Science Building Room 2053
 T: 864-3168
 E: writing@mun.ca
<https://www.mun.ca/writingcentre/>