

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

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SSC - 245

Sentence Types

Overview: Using a variety of sentence types will make your writing more stylistically interesting and complex. There are four main sentence types: **simple sentences**, **compound sentences**, **complex sentences**, and **compound-complex sentences**. Alternating between sentence types will add variety to the rhythm of your writing, making it more engaging to your reader.

SIMPLE SENTENCES consist of just one independent clause.

Examples of simple sentences:

- 1) She went to the bookstore.
- 2) I want to be a teacher.
- 3) Breakfast is the most important meal of the day.
- 4) Few species of palm tree are native to Southern California.

COMPOUND SENTENCES are made up of two or more independent clauses, and no dependent clauses.

Independent clauses must be joined together with a coordinating conjunction (FANYBOYS) and a comma, OR with a conjunctive adverb and a semicolon in order to avoid run-on sentences and commas splices.

Examples of compound sentences constructed using a coordinating conjunction and a comma:

- 1) She finally received her financial aid check, **so** she went to the bookstore.
- 2) I want to be a teacher, **but** I will be in school for another year in order to complete my teaching credential.

Examples of compound sentences constructed using a conjunctive adverb and a semicolon:

- 3) Breakfast is the most important meal of the day; **nevertheless**, teens feel they do not have time for breakfast.
- 4) Many people associate palm trees with Southern California; **however**, few species of palm tree are native to this area.

COMPLEX SENTENCES consist of one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses.

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