

# Welcome to the Purdue OWL



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**Summary:**

This handout describes eight sentence punctuation patterns with examples.

## Sentence Punctuation Patterns

To punctuate a sentence, you can use and combine some of these patterns. For more information on independent and dependent clauses plus independent and dependent markers, see our handouts on those subjects.

**Pattern One: Simple sentence**

This pattern is an example of a simple sentence:

Independent clause [ . ]

Example: Doctors are concerned about the rising death rate from asthma.

**Pattern Two : Compound Sentence**

This pattern is an example of a compound sentence with a coordinating conjunction:

Independent clause [ , ] coordinating conjunction independent clause [ . ]

There are seven coordinating conjunctions: and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet.

Example: Doctors are concerned about the rising death rate from asthma, but they don't know the reasons for it.

**Pattern Three: Compound Sentence**

This pattern is an example of a compound sentence with a semicolon.

Independent clause [ ; ] independent clause [ . ]

Example: Doctors are concerned about the rising death rate from asthma; they are unsure of its cause.

#### **Pattern Four: Compound Sentence**

This pattern is an example of a compound sentence with an independent marker.

Independent clause [ ; ] independent marker [ , ] independent clause [ . ]

Examples of independent markers are the following: therefore, moreover, thus, consequently, however, also.

Example: Doctors are concerned about the rising death rate from asthma; therefore, they have called for more research into its causes.

#### **Pattern Five: Complex Sentence**

This pattern is an example of a complex sentence with a dependent marker.

Dependent marker dependent clause[ , ] Independent clause[ . ]

Examples of dependent markers are as follows: because, before, since, while, although, if, until, when, after, as, as if.

Example: Because doctors are concerned about the rising death rate from asthma, they have called for more research into its causes.

#### **Pattern Six: Complex Sentence**

This pattern is an example of a complex sentence with a dependent marker.

Independent clause dependent marker dependent clause [ . ]

Examples of dependent markers are as follows: because, before, since, while, although, if, until, when, after, as, as if.

Example: Doctors are concerned about the rising death rate from asthma because it is a common, treatable illness.

#### **Pattern Seven**

This pattern includes an independent clause with an embedded non-essential clause or phrase

First part of an independent clause [ , ] non-essential clause or phrase, rest of the independent clause [ . ]

A non-essential clause or phrase is one that can be removed without changing the meaning of the sentence or making it ungrammatical. In other words, the non-essential clause or phrase gives additional information, but the sentence can stand alone without it.

Example: Many doctors, including both pediatricians and family practice physicians, are concerned about the rising death rate from asthma.

### **Pattern Eight**

This pattern includes an independent clause with an embedded essential clause or phrase

First part of an independent clause essential clause or phrase rest of the independent clause [ . ]

An essential clause or phrase is one that cannot be removed without changing the overall meaning of the sentence.

Example: Many doctors who are concerned about the rising death rate from asthma have called for more research into its causes.

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