

What is a Clause?

A group of words in a sentence that contains a subject and a verb

Simple Sentence: Contains **only one clause**.

This does not mean that the sentence will necessarily be short!
(The subject and verb are underlined below)

"Goldilocks then saw three cups, and three bowls, and three forks, and three spoons, and three beds, and three....."



Compound Sentence: Contains **two equal clauses** joined by a conjunction.

"She ate and he drank."
Subject 1 Verb 1 conj Subject 2 Verb 2

"She balanced on the tightrope but the audience only yawned."
Subject 1 Verb 1 conj Subject 2 Verb 2



Complex Sentence: Has **one main clause** and **one or more dependent clauses**.

A **main clause** (a.k.a independent clause) can stand alone as a sentence. You can walk up to someone and say "I always wear a red hat."

They may think you're odd, but they won't ask questions.
The thought is complete.

On the other hand, if you walk up to someone and just say "when it gets cold," they will probably ask you "what about, when it gets cold?" The thought is not complete, and the clause can not stand alone; it is therefore a **dependent clause**. It depends on a main clause to make sense: "I always wear a red hat when it gets cold."

