

Part II: Understanding Sentences

The “Online Exercise” icons in Part II of the handbook refer to the following exercises.

Exercise 1: Subject and Predicate, Noun and Verb (see section #12a)

Compose five two-word sentences similar to those in the example in section #12a in the handbook. Each will need a single-word noun or a pronoun as its subject and a single-word verb as its predicate.

Exercise 2: Articles and Other Modifiers (see section #12b)

Rewrite the sentences you wrote for Exercise 1, adding articles and single-word adjectives and adverbs to them as you think appropriate.

Exercise 3: Basic Sentence Patterns (see section #12c-k)

Identify the pattern of each of the following sentences.

1. Food nourishes. Pattern _____
2. Bruce finds gardening relaxing. Pattern _____
3. The Schmidts are excellent cooks. Pattern _____
4. I love lasagna. Pattern _____
5. There are nine modules in our oceanography course. Pattern _____
6. Poor Stephen was hit by a bus. Pattern _____
7. Jacques brought me luck. Pattern _____
8. Certain music can affect one’s emotions. Pattern _____
9. The group elected Jo spokesperson. Pattern _____
10. Some people are superstitious. Pattern _____
11. Helen was nearly late for her interview. Pattern _____
12. The team thanked the coach. Pattern _____
13. Yesterday, Helen bought Eric a new dictionary. Pattern _____

Exercise 4: Sentence Pattern 1 (see section #12c)

Return to the sentences you wrote for Exercises 1 and 2, or compose new ones, this time adding a few more modifiers to some of the nouns and verbs.

Exercise 5: Sentence Pattern 2A (see section #12d)

Compose five sentences following Pattern 2A in section #12d in the handbook, some with modifiers and some without.

Exercise 6: Sentence Pattern 2B (passive voice) (see section #12e)

Convert each sentence you wrote for Exercise 5 into Pattern 2B. How many now seem to be sentences you could use in effective writing? Try to include them in contexts where they would be preferable to the versions you wrote for Pattern 2A. Then compose a few new sentences using Pattern 2B, ones that make clear sense in the passive voice.

Exercise 7: Sentence Pattern 3 (see section #12f)

Compose five sentences in Pattern 3, then rewrite two of them using a prepositional phrase, with *to* or *for*, instead of an indirect object.

Exercise 8: Sentence Pattern 4A (see section #12g)

Compose three sentences following Pattern 4A.

Exercise 9: Sentence Pattern 4B (see section #12h)

Compose three sentences following Pattern 4B.

Exercise 10: Sentence Pattern 5A (see section #12i)

Compose three sentences following Pattern 5A.

Exercise 11: Sentence Pattern 5B (see section #12j)

Compose three sentences following Pattern 5B.

Exercise 12 (1): Sentence Pattern 6 (expletive) (see section #12k)

Try converting the eight examples below into a different pattern (for example, *Several protesters were waiting to heckle the premier*). In what kinds of contexts might the alternative—and more direct—versions be preferable?

1. There were several protesters waiting to heckle the premier.
2. It is easy to follow this recipe.

3. It is challenging to study Sanskrit.
4. There wasn't a cloud in the sky.
5. There were many people who disagreed with the speaker.
6. It is disappointing to learn of the team's defeat.
7. It was frustrating to wait so long for the test results.
8. There was a crowd at the airport waiting for the soldiers to return.

Exercise 12 (2): Sentence Pattern 6 (expletive) (see section #12k)

Convert the following sentences into Pattern 6:

1. Ten mugs of hot tea are on the table.
2. No way around the obstacle exists.
3. To look directly at a solar eclipse is dangerous.
4. A magnificent celebration occurred.
5. People were everywhere!
6. Waiter, a fly is in my soup.

Do some seem better in the expletive form? Why? How might context determine one's choice?

Exercise 13: Clauses and Phrases (see section #12m-r)

Indicate whether each of the following groups of words is an independent clause, a subordinate clause, or a phrase. Label the subject (*S*) and the verb (*V*) in each clause. In the case of a subordinate clause, circle the subordinator.

1. not only BC but PEI as well _____
2. rarely have we witnessed such a performance _____
3. for the first time in her life she was speechless _____
4. since no one was paying attention _____
5. down the hall from my office _____

6. but interest rates are rising _____
7. while looking for his cell phone _____
8. his bubble burst _____
9. after the conference was over _____
10. according to the overly complicated directions in the guidebook _____

Exercise 14 (1): Appositives (see section #12q)

Combine each of the following pairs of sentences into a single sentence by reducing one of each pair to an appositive. Construct one or two so that the appositive comes first.

1. Joe is an amateur astronomer. He uses his telescope to scan the skies every night.
2. Diana Krall is a talented jazz singer. She turns old standards into memorable contemporary pieces.
3. I must thank my teachers for encouraging me in my education. They inspired me with their confidence about the future.
4. My grandfather believes in hard work. He tends to his vegetable garden for hours every day.
5. You can save time by preparing carefully. That is, you can take careful notes and draft a clear plan for your argument.

Exercise 14 (2): Appositives (see section #12q)

Combine each of the following pairs of sentences into a single sentence by reducing all or part of one of them to an appositive. You may drop some words and rearrange others, but don't change the basic meaning. For practice, try to write some sentences in more than one way. In each case, identify the appositive phrase you have created by underlining it.

Example: Hong Kong is one of Asia's busiest ports. It is a major Pacific commercial centre.

- (a) Hong Kong, one of Asia's busiest ports, is a major Pacific commercial centre.
- (b) One of Asia's busiest ports, Hong Kong, is a major Pacific commercial centre.
- (c) One of Asia's busiest ports, Hong Kong is a major Pacific commercial centre.

1. The book I read last weekend was *The Golden Compass*. It is the first volume of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy.
2. To become a fine architect is not easy. It takes many years of study and apprenticeship.
3. I always look forward to April. It is the month when the cherry blossoms appear.

4. Team sports more than occupy her spare time. She plays volleyball, field hockey, and soccer.
5. Tabloid newspapers seem to go in for sensationalism. They are the smaller, easier-to-hold newspapers.
6. Canada has a larger land mass than any other country except Russia. It is a country with a small population.
7. She was relaxed and confident when she began the competition. She was sure she could win.
8. The word *hamburger* is one of the common words we take for granted. It comes from the name of a German city.
9. Dr Snyder is our family physician. She is a dedicated person who works long hours.
10. Running marathons is not something everyone should try. It is a potentially dangerous sport.
11. Michael is a young composer. He writes music for the local youth orchestra.
12. My Grade 5 teacher was a big baseball fan. He let us listen to the World Series games while we wrote our geography notes.
13. The essay is due on Friday. Remember that it must include a cover page and a bibliography.

Exercise 15: Absolute Phrases (see section #12r)

Compose five sentences using absolute phrases. In each of your sentences, underline the absolute phrase. You may want to start with pairs of sentences or with sentences containing a *with*-phrase.

Exercise 16: Order of Elements in Declarative Sentences (see section #12s)

Try composing four or five declarative sentences that vary the standard order of elements in one way or another.

Exercise 17: Order of Elements in Interrogative Sentences (see section #12t)

Select a representative variety of ten sentences from those you've written for earlier exercises in this chapter and rewrite them as questions. Try using two or more different forms of question for some of the sentences.

Exercise 18: Minor Sentences, Fragments, and Major Sentences (see 12w-y)

Indicate whether the italicized group of words in each of the following is a minor sentence or a fragment. In examples where the italicized words constitute a fragment, suggest a revision to correct the problem.

1. We stayed at the picnic. *Until the sun went down.*

2. Just look at the way they play together. *How rare!*
3. You say you've never seen this man? *Never?*
4. We chose to eat at this restaurant. *It having a vegetarian menu, after all.*
5. The coach praised his team for the win. *A very proud moment.*
6. Jill challenged Jack to climb the hill. *Sooner rather than later.*

Exercise 19 (1): Kinds of Major Sentences (see #12z)

Label each of the following sentences as simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex.

1. If you read this novel, you will find yourself questioning the narrator's credibility.

2. Everybody is going to laugh on cue. _____
3. The trombonist who performed so well at this concert is the same one we saw last summer at the Montreal Jazz Festival. _____
4. The groom mumbled a bit; the bride spoke her vows in a clear, strong voice. _____
5. Few things are more pleasant than a lovingly prepared and carefully presented elegant meal consisting of several courses, consumed in good company, with soft background music, and accompanied by noble wines. _____
6. They chose the stocks they judged to be safest, but they lost money in the recession nevertheless. _____
7. Our classmates concluded a heated debate of the issue, and then we all voted in favour of lowering the voting age to sixteen. _____
8. A philosophy major will learn to think clearly and will acquire a sense of cultural history, and so when she graduates she should probably have the critical thinking skills and knowledge base to make herself employable. _____
9. After Chris finished his medieval history course, he decided to spend the summer writing a novel based on the life of Charlemagne. _____
10. Mystery novels challenge readers with a puzzle, and a good mystery writer will make sure that the reader doesn't know the answer until the very end. _____
11. Helen loves writing horror stories. _____

Exercise 19 (2): Kinds of Major Sentences (see #12z)

Recycle one or more of the original simple sentences you composed for Exercise 1 as you go on to write the following more complicated sentences. Use as many other modifiers—words and phrases—as you want.

1. Compose three simple sentences.
2. Compose two compound sentences, each with two independent clauses.
3. Compose a compound sentence with three independent clauses.
4. Compose two complex sentences, each with one independent and one subordinate clause.
5. Compose a complex sentence with one independent and two subordinate clauses.
6. Compose three compound-complex sentences.