English Grammar

A Student's Guide to Sentence Types in Academic Writing

http://www.efltutoring.com/
There are 5 basic sentence patterns in English:

- Subject + verb
- Subject + verb + object
- Subject + verb + complement
- Subject + verb + object + complement
- Subject + verb + indirect object + direct object
There are 4 basic types of sentence in English:

Simple
Compound
Complex
Compound-complex
Sentence Types

Examples

• **Simple sentence**: Academic writing is difficult.

• **Compound sentence**: Academic writing is difficult *and* academic reading is challenging.

• **Complex sentence**: Academic writing is difficult *because* the ideas are complex.

• **Compound-complex**: Academic writing is difficult because of the difficulty of the ideas being expressed.
Simple sentences contain one (or more) subject(s) and one verb

Examples

• Academic writing [subject] is [verb] difficult.

• Academic writing and academic reading [subjects] are [verb] difficult.
Compound sentences contain two (or more) clauses joined by a coordinator, connector, or semicolon (;):

Academic writing is difficult and (coordinator) academic reading is challenging.

- Academic writing is difficult, so (connector) it needs practice.
- Academic writing is difficult; (semicolon) academic reading is challenging.
Complex sentences contain one (or more) main clause and one dependent (subordinate) clause.

Complex sentences

- **Because** academic reading is challenging, it takes time to master.
- **Even though** academic reading is challenging, it can be a stimulating activity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Subject</strong></th>
<th>The person or thing which performs the action of a verb (CLD)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verb</strong></td>
<td>A word or phrase that describes an action, condition or experience (CLD)</td>
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<td><strong>Direct object</strong></td>
<td>A person, place, or thing that is affected by the action of a verb, or involved in the result of an action (CLD)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indirect object</strong></td>
<td>A person, place, or thing that benefits from the action of a verb (Adapted from Seely, 2009)</td>
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<td><strong>Complement</strong></td>
<td>Part of a clause that completes an earlier part such as the subject (Seely, 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Clause</strong></td>
<td>Part of a sentence which contains a subject and a verb. A clause may also contain an object, complement or adverbial (Seely, 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Connector</strong></td>
<td>A word which joins 2 elements of a sentence. Common connectors are; <em>and, or, but</em> (Seely, 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent clause</strong></td>
<td>Part of a sentence which 'can act as the subject, object, complement, or adverbial of the main clause' (Seely, 2009, p. 29). Also known as a 'subordinate clause'</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subordinator</strong></td>
<td>A word which joins a main clause with a subordinate clause (Seely, 2009)</td>
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</table>


Thank you for watching!

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