



Clauses

1. What is a clause?
2. Recognise the difference between main and subordinate clauses



What is a clause?

Good question...

- ★ A clause is considered to be 'the next step down' from a sentence.
- ★ A short sentence might contain just one clause. A longer, more complicated sentence might contain three or four clauses.
- ★ There are two types of clause: a main clause and a subordinate clause

A Main Clause

A main clause will always contain a **subject** and a **verb**, and makes complete sense on its own.

The subject is the person or thing completing the verb. In this clause, the person who 'went' is 'I'. Therefore, 'I' is the subject.

The verb shows the **action** taking place in the sentence. Here the verb is 'went'. Other verbs we could have used in this sentence are 'ran' and 'walked'.

This short sentence contains one main clause. We know this because of the following:

- 1) It contains a verb
- 2) It contains a subject
- 3) It makes sense on its own



I went to the shops.



A Subordinate Clause

A subordinate clause is a part of a sentence that does not make sense on its own. The main clause is needed to make sense of the subordinate clause.

I walked to the shops, which were far away.



This was our original **main clause**. It has a subject and a verb and makes sense on its own. It could be a sentence on its own.

This is a subordinate clause. Without the main clause, we do not know what the 'which' is referring to; it could be birds or houses that are far away! This could not be a sentence on its own, as it does not make sense without the main clause.

! Main clauses are usually joined to subordinate clauses with a comma (as in the example above)



Main v Subordinate Clause

Can you remember the properties of main and subordinate clauses?

Main Clause	Subordinate Clause
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Must contain a subject and a verb2) Must make complete sense on its own (could be a short sentence on its own)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Does not make sense on its own2) The main clause is needed to make sense of the subordinate clause3) May not contain a subject or a verb

Main or subordinate clause?

The punctuation has been deliberately removed, to make this a little harder!

I laughed at the film



Main clause. Subject = 'I' and verb = 'laughed'

From far away



Subordinate clause. What is happening far away?

If it rains



Subordinate clause. What will happen if it rains?

The dog barked



Main clause. Subject = 'The dog' and verb = 'barked'

Simon coughed



Main clause. Subject = 'Simon' and verb = 'coughed'

Which was cold



Subordinate clause. What was cold?



CONGRATULATIONS!

**You have successfully completed a HIIT 5 min
grammar session... go you! ★ ★**

For more information and some
amazing resources, head to
aishathetutor.com