

Commas in COMPLEX SENTENCES

COMMA RULE #3 - Use a comma to set off a dependent clause from an independent clause when the dependent clause begins a COMPLEX sentence.

Review: A **COMPLEX** sentence has a dependent and independent clause.

An **INDEPENDENT CLAUSE** has a subject and a verb and is a complete thought. In other words, an independent clause is a **sentence**.

A **DEPENDENT CLAUSE** has a subject and a verb but is **NOT** a complete thought. In other words, dependent clause is a **fragment**.

A dependent clause **DEPENDS** on the rest of the sentence to make sense.

Dependent clauses begin with a **subordinating conjunction** or **AAAWWUBBIS-**

as after although when while until because before if since
(There are other subordinating conjunctions – these are the most common)

When a dependent clause **BEGINS** a complex sentence, it is followed by a comma.

Examples: While I respect your decision, I absolutely do not agree with it.

dependent clause



independent clause

Because I could not stop for death, he kindly stopped for me.

dependent clause



independent clause

Notice that if you remove the dependent clause, you still have a sentence.

Only use a comma when the dependent clause **begins the sentence**.

If I get a new job, I will be very happy.

dependent clause at the beginning of the complex sentence – add a comma

I will be very happy if I get a new job. (no comma)

independent clause

dependent clause at the end – no comma needed

Underline DEPENDENT clause(s) AND add commas to the following sentences if necessary.

1. When I get home I am going to eat a snack because I am starving.
2. Because she is only 15 she is not old enough to drive.

3. The shortstop caught the ball before the runner got to first base.
 4. While they were waiting for the bus it began to rain.
 5. After the movie was over we went to get ice cream.
 6. The plan can move forward since we all agree.
 7. Whether you like it or not you will go to get your hair cut.
 8. Because she did not consult her calendar Mary missed her appointment.
 9. After many days at the mine the workers were tired and angry.
 10. As though nothing had happened she sat down comfortably.
 11. Write a complex sentence with the dependent clause at the **beginning** of the sentence.
Underline the dependent clause.
-

12. Write a complex sentence with the dependent clause at the **end** of the sentence. Underline the dependent clause.
-

Watch this really cute video about complex sentences starring the Simpsons in Google Classroom.

