

# Coordination and Subordination

A basic sentence has a subject and a verb. There are other elements that can go into making a sentence, but for the purposes of this explanation, think in terms of the most basic sentence form:

**Sentence = Subject + Verb.**

*Example: "You won the lottery." Here's another one you might recognize: "Jesus wept."*

## Coordination combines simple sentences in which both get equal emphasis

**Sentence 1 [comma] (coordinating conjunction) Sentence 2.**

Coordinating conjunctions: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so . . .

*Example: "I will marry you, so you win the lottery."*

**Sentence 1 [semicolon] (conjunctive adverb) [comma] Sentence 2.**

Conjunctive adverbs: however, therefore, moreover, consequently, on the other hand . . . etc.

*Note that the first sentence ends with a semicolon, the conjunctive adverb is followed by a comma, and the second sentence follows.*

*Example: "You won the lottery; consequently, I will marry you."*

**Sentence 1 [semicolon] Sentence 2.**

**Note: The sentences must be related in order to use a semicolon.**

*Incorrect example: "I will go to the party; John has a blue tie."  
The relationship here is not clear enough to warrant using a semicolon.*

*Example: "I will marry you; you win the lottery."*

*This example works as long as the reader recognizes that the relationship here is sarcastic.*

## Subordination combines simple sentences, making one dependent on the other

**Sentence 1 (subordinating word) Sentence 2.**

Subordinate words: when, if, because, since, although, etc.

Note: there is **no comma** used when the subordinate word is **between** two sentences.

*Example: "I will marry you when you win the lottery."*

**(Subordinating word) Sentence 1 [comma] Sentence 2.**

Note how the first sentence becomes dependent on the second sentence because of the addition of the word "when," and a comma separates the dependent sentence from the independent one.

*Example: "When you win the lottery, I will marry you."*