Combining Sentences
Five Options for Sentence Variety

Introduction of Terms

Clauses
Sentences are built from clauses. There are two types:

Independent Clauses (IC)
⇒ An independent clause is a complete thought. It makes sense even when it stands alone. One independent clause can be its own complete sentence.

Dependent Clauses (DC)
⇒ A dependent clause is a group of words that form a “chunk” of a sentence, but which cannot stand alone as a complete thought.

Conjunctions
Various forms of conjunctions, combined with punctuation can be used to connect clauses in order to form more complex ideas. There are several main types of conjunctions, but only three are commonly used to combine clauses:

Coordinating Conjunctions
⇒ Coordinating conjunctions are words that are used to not only combine independent clauses, but also communicate the relationship between the clauses.
⇒ All coordinating conjunctions require a comma before they are introduced.

Subordinating Conjunctions
⇒ Coordinating conjunctions are words that introduce and create dependent clauses, connecting them to independent clauses.
⇒ When a subordinating conjunction is placed at the beginning of an independent clause, it turns the clause into a dependent clause.

Conjunctive Adverbs
⇒ A conjunctive adverb is a type of adverb or adverbial phrase that communicates the relationship between two clauses.

Option 1: IC + Coordinating Conjunction + IC

I walked to the store, and I bought some milk.
I like ice cream, but I do not like cake.

NOTE: Do not forget to properly punctuate when using a coordinating conjunction! A comma should appear after the first independent clause and before the coordinating conjunction.

WORD BANK: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so
**Option 2: IC + Semicolon + IC**

The dog chased the cat; the cat ran away.

I like ice cream; I do not like cake.

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**Option 3: IC + Semicolon + Conjunctive Adverb + IC**

I failed to study for the final exam; therefore, I failed the course.

I like ice cream; however, I do not like cake.

**NOTE:** Do not forget to properly punctuate when beginning an independent clause with an adverb! A comma should appear between the adverb and the independent clause.

**WORD BANK:** also, anyway, as a result, besides, certainly, consequently, finally, furthermore, however, incidentally, in addition, in fact, indeed, instead, likewise, meanwhile, moreover, nevertheless, next, now, on the other hand, otherwise, similarly, still, then, therefore, thus, undoubtedl

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**Option 4: Subordinating Conjunction + DC + Comma + IC**

Because it rained, I got wet.

Although I like ice cream, I do not like cake.

**NOTE:** When a subordinating conjunction is placed at the beginning of an independent clause, it turns the clause into a dependent clause.

**NOTE:** When the dependent clause comes first in the sentence, it is necessary to end the dependent clause with a comma before beginning the independent clause.

**WORD BANK:** after, although, as, as if, as soon as, because, before, even though, even if, if, in order that, once, since, so that, though, unless, until, when, whenever, where, whereas, whether, while

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**Option 5: IC + Subordinating Conjunction + DC**

I got wet because it rained.

I like ice cream even though I do not like cake.

**NOTE:** When a subordinating conjunction is placed at the beginning of an independent clause, it turns the clause into a dependent clause.

**WORD BANK:** after, although, as, as if, as soon as, because, before, even though, even if, if, in order that, once, since, so that, though, unless, until, when, whenever, where, whereas, whether, while