

## The Adverbial Clause: Types, Functions and Examples

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Glad to find you reading **The Adverbial Clause: Types, Functions and Examples**. An adverbial clause is the subordinate, Beta or [dependent clause](#) that performs the function of an adverb in a [sentence](#). An [adverb](#) modifies the [verb](#) in a [sentence](#) (the verb must be stated). It answers the questions: ‘where’, ‘when’, ‘why’, ‘how’, etc. This is because the **adverbial** clause has different types. For instance:

- *When he was frightened by his friend, he ran away.*

It answers the question ‘when?’ which is an adverbial clause of time.

**Function:** It modifies the verb ‘ran away’. (A particle of ‘fled’)

Adverbial clauses are of various types and they perform the same function of modifying the verb in the sentences in which they occur. Let us see some types...

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### The Adverbial Clause: Types, Functions and Examples

Let us start this discussion by first looking at the various types of adverbial clauses we have with illustrative examples...

## Adverbial Clause of Time

This refers to when an action takes place. For instance:

- ***As soon as** the man saw his wife, he ran away.*
- ***Before** she completed the cooking, the visitors had left.*
- ***After** the church service, the children went to the zoo.*
- ***Immediately** he came home, he went to bed.*
- ***When** the war ended, many families returned to their abandoned homes.*
- ***While** she was cooking, I came in.*
- *The boy ran away **when** he saw the police.*
- *The thief froze **as soon as** he heard the sirens.*
- *His feeding pattern had changed **since** she came around.*
- ***Until** he comes, nobody will leave the house.*

## Adverbial Clause of Place

This refers to where an action takes place. For instance:

- *Jane sat **where** her mother had prepared for her friend.*
- *I will go **wherever** you go.*
- *She promised to look for the purse **wherever** she might find it.*
- *Send us to **wherever** you want to.*
- *The plane crashed **where** it was difficult to locate.*
- *He travelled **where** no one could reach him.*
- *She fell **where** the makeshift wooden bridge was weak.*
- *I will go **wherever** you go.*

## Adverbial Clause of Manner

This refers to how an action takes place. For instance:

- *The man was talking **as if** she was the leader of the group.*
- *The choir sang **as though** the heavens would fall.*
- *She performed **so** excellently that she got a scholarship.*
- *Please do it (exactly) **as** I instructed.*

## Adverbial Clause of Reason

This clause tells us the reason for the action the **verb** expresses. Subordinating conjunctions such as that, because, since, as, etc. Examples include:

- *The man works hard **because** he has debts to offset.*
- ***Because** he has money, he believes he can get away with the crime.*
- *He was denied entrance **as** he could not pay the required fees.*
- *He was not happy **that** he could not make the list.*
- *His people were angry **that** he was not elected their representative.*
- *She may not be charged to court **since** she has returned the stolen funds.*

**Note:** sometimes, we might omit the **conjunction** 'that' as we have in the following sentences:

- *He was happy he could make the list.*
- *His people were angry he was not elected their representative.*
- *I am glad you were able to come.*

We use ‘as’ and ‘since’ when the reason is obvious to the listener. For instance:

- We will have to trek **as** the last vehicle just left.
- **Since** we are not the only ones involved, we will have to wait for instructions.

In the case of ‘because’, we use it when the reason is NOT obvious to the listener.

- The principal sent him out of school because he had not paid his fees.

## Adverbial Clause of Condition

This clause usually states the condition the verb in the main clause stipulates. Some of the **subordinating conjunctions** that introduce this clause include: whether, if, provided, unless, as long as, etc. Let us take some examples:

- I will only attend the event **if** you personally invite me.
- **Whether** she likes it or not, she must complete her education in Nigeria.
- There will be no need to go to court **provided** you sign the papers.
- **Unless** we embark on industrial action, the government will not listen to our grievances.
- **As long as** you cooperate, there would be no problem.

A relative pronoun may sometimes introduce a clause of condition. Look at the following:

- **Whatever** he gives you, do not complain.
- **However** carefully you hide, the security man will certainly see you.

## Adverbial Clause of Concession

As the name of this clause goes, it usually states that which we admit or acknowledge in the main clause. The subordinators that introduce this clause are mainly ‘though’ and ‘although’. However, there are other subordinators that could mean either of these words and which we could use in expressing concessionary clauses. These include: even though, while, despite, in spite of, whereas, etc. Let us see some sentences that exemplify the adverbial clause of concession...

- **Although** he was indisposed, he went to the office.
- **Though** he was a trained teacher, he detests teaching.
- **While** she cannot speak French, she likes visiting Francophone countries.
- **Even though** he cannot drive, he loves cars.
- They eat out every weekend **though** they have a cook.
- **Though** the kids are poor, they are very lively and happy.
- **Although** he loves to take her out, his father would not allow him.
- **While** it is true that investments pay, there is a need to be knowledgeable about business.
- **Despite** the fact that he read very well, he failed the examination.
- **In spite of** his popularity, he was not recognised.

## Adverbial Clause of Purpose

We usually introduce this clause by **subordinating conjunctions** such as “, so, so that, in order to in order that, etc. The clause tells us the purpose of the action the verb states. Examples include:

- He reads so hard **so that** he can graduate top of his class.
- The ceremony was rounded off **in order that** attendees might get to their destinations on time.
- We should work smarter and not harder **so that** we will not wear out our bodies.

**Note:** Modal auxiliary verbs usually follow the ‘so that’ clauses. It is also possible to omit ‘that’ in some instances like:

- *I was here last week so / so that I could talk you out of the deal.*

## Adverbial Clause of Degree or Comparison

Adverbial Clause of degree usually indicates the degree, that is, the relative extent or the comparison of the verb in the main or independent clause. It answers the questions how much, how many or how little. The subordinate conjunctions that usually introduce this clause include as, than, as...as, so...as and others. Let us see some examples of this clause:

- *She is **as** loquacious **as** she is ill-mannered.*
- *The factory is bigger than the one in the capital city.*
- *The students were quicker in solving the sums than I expected.*
- *You are not as troublesome as your brother.*
- *The villains are as cunning as a fox*
- *We are as qualified as their own team.*

### *Things to Note about Adverbial Clause of Degree or Comparison*

Sometimes, we might consider the correlative ‘the...the’ as a conjunction which introduces the adverb clause of degree. Examples of this instance include the following:

- *The more one grows older the more patient one becomes.*
- *The richer you become the more generous you ought to be.*

Also, in adverbial clauses of degree, we normally understand the verb even though we do not express it. Let us illustrate with these sentences:

- *I write as much as you (do write). or*
- *I write as much as you (do).*
- *She is as intelligent as her sister (is).*
- *We are as busy as you (are).*
- *The officer earns more than I (do).*

We should note that when we do not express the verb, it is more appropriate to use object pronouns after ‘as’ and ‘than’. Let us illustrate each of these pairs...

She can dance as well as him.

- *She can dance well as he does.*
- *Nobody in the office works harder than her.*
- *Nobody in the office works harder than she does.*
- *He is taller than me.*
- *He is taller than I am.*
- *We can play better than them.*
- *We can play better than they do.*
- *The dog is bigger than it.*
- *The dog is bigger than it is.*

## What are adverb clauses?

Adverb clauses are dependent clauses. That means that an adverb clause cannot stand along as a sentence. It must be attached to a main, independent clause. Adverb clauses may come at the beginning or end of a sentence. Look at these examples:

**While you were sleeping**, I washed the dishes.

I washed the dishes **while you were sleeping**.

The meanings of both sentences are the same. Note that when the adverb clause comes first, it is followed by a comma. When it comes at the end of the sentence, you do not need a comma.

There are 4 types of adverb clauses: **time**, **contrast**, **cause and effect**, and **condition**. We will look at each type.

### Adverb clauses to time

These clauses tell **when** something is happening. Use the following words to introduce an adverb clause of time: **when**, **while**, **until**, **as soon as**, **before**, **after**, or **since**.

1. **When you get home**, call me. 🔊
2. He worked three jobs **while he was in college**. 🔊
3. I won't be ready **until I finish the laundry**. 🔊
4. **As soon as it snows**, we are going skiing. 🔊
5. She has to finish school **before she can look for a job**. 🔊
6. **After it rains**, everything always smells fresh and clean. 🔊
7. He has lived in New York **since he was 7**. 🔊

### Adverb Clauses of Contrast

Adverb clauses of contrast express the **opposite of what you would expect**. These words introduce adverb clauses of contrast: **although**, **even though**, **though**, **whereas**, **while**

1. **Although he just lost his job**, he is taking a trip to Europe next week. 🔊
2. Earl Boykins is a professional basketball player **even though he is very short**. 🔊
3. She doesn't speak Japanese **though she has lived in Japan for 10 years**. 🔊
4. John prefers coffee **whereas Mary prefers tea**. 🔊
5. **While my brother studied Spanish**, I studied French. 🔊

### Adverb clauses of cause and effect

Adverb clauses of cause and effect explain **why** something has happened. Introduce adverb clauses of cause and effect with the following words: **because**, **since**, **as**, **so (that)**.

1. I didn't go to Juan's party **because I'm very shy**. 🔊
2. **Since they did not offer the job to me**, I found another position. 🔊
3. I never eat hamburgers **as I'm a vegetarian**. 🔊
4. Please let me know when you are arriving **so (that) I can meet you at the airport**. 🔊
- 5.

## Adverb clauses of condition

Conditional adverb clauses talk about what might happen as long as some other condition takes place. These words introduce adverb clauses of condition: **if, even if, unless, whether or not**.

1. **If I were rich**, I would start a business. 🔊
2. She will never return to him **even if he quits drinking**. 🔊
3. **Unless the weather changes**, we will not be able to go on our picnic. 🔊
4. I will be at work tomorrow **whether or not it snows**. 🔊

## Reducing adverb clauses

Some, but not all, adverb clauses can be reduced. When this happens, there is no longer both a subject and a verb. Therefore an adverb clause becomes an adverb phrase. You will see two sentences below for each type of adverb clause that can be reduced. The first will be with an adverb clause, and the second with an adverb phrase. The meaning of the sentences will remain the same.

**Time**—To reduce adverb clauses of time, use this formula: **time word + ing form of the verb**

1. **Before he applied for his job at the university**, he did a lot of research. 🔊
2. **Before applying for his job at the university**, he did a lot of research. 🔊 *Note that if the adverb phrase comes at the beginning of the sentence, you will need a comma.*

**Contrast**—To reduce adverb clauses of contrast, use this formula: **contrast word + ing form of the verb**

1. He was always broke **though he earned a high salary**. 🔊
2. He was always broke **though earning a high salary**. 🔊 *Note that when the adverb phrase comes at the end of the sentence, you do not need a comma.*

To reduce adverb clauses with **be** verb, use this formula: **contrast word + adjective**

1. **Although she is poor**, she always dresses well. 🔊
2. **Although poor**, she always dresses well. 🔊

**Cause and effect**—To reduce adverb clauses of cause and effect, use this formula: **ing form of the verb + adjective for be verb, subject for all other verbs**.

1. **Because she was late**, she drove to work instead of taking the bus. 🔊
2. **Being late**, she drove to work instead of taking the bus. 🔊
3. **As Bob had extra work to do**, he stayed at the office late. 🔊
4. **Having extra work to do**, Bob stayed at the office late. 🔊

**You now know that adverb clauses modify, describe, or give us more information about the verb in the sentence. They are dependent clauses. There are 4 types of adverb clauses: time, contrast, cause and effect, and condition. The adverb clause may come at the beginning or at the end of the sentence. Adverb clauses are introduced by specific words that will tell you what type of an adverb clause it is. Finally, certain types of adverb clauses (time, contrast, and cause and effect) can be reduced to adverb phrases. The download will give you more practice using and understanding adverb clauses.**