

SIMPLE SENTENCES

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW	
A simple sentence, also called an independent clause, is a group of words that expresses a complete thought. A sentence must have a subject and a verb .	The dog ate his food. (“Dog” is the subject; “ate is the verb.”) Mary loves her dog. (“Mary” is the subject; “loves” is the verb.) She left her coat at school. (“She” is the subject; “left” is the verb.)
The subject is the person, place, thing, or idea that the sentence is about. The subject is a noun or a pronoun.	The teacher arrived early. The park is across the street. The book fell on the floor. Democracy is a noble idea.
The simple subject is just the noun or pronoun.	Three silly girls giggled during class. The handsome boy was actually very mean. Our neglected park was dangerous at night.
The complete subject is the simple subject and any words that describe it.	Three silly girls giggled during class. The handsome boy was actually very mean. Our neglected park was dangerous at night.
A name with two (or more) words is a simple subject.	Theodore Roosevelt charged up San Juan Hill. Martin Luther King proclaimed, “I have a dream.”
A prepositional phrase is a group of words that contains a preposition and the object of that preposition, a noun or a pronoun.	on the table down the street under the bed
No part of a prepositional phrase can ever be the subject of a sentence.	The books (on the table) belong to Sophia. The convenience store (down the street) is closed. The pair (of shoes)(under the bed) is mine.
Imperative sentences give advice or issue commands. The subject of an imperative sentence is you .	Stop! Don’t do that. Watch your step.
A sentence can have more than one subject joined by and, or, or nor . This is called a compound subject.	Jim and Alan watched the football game. Either Pam or Wally will pick you up at the airport. Neither Colleen nor Elaine is going to the party.
The verb explains what the sentence says about the subject.	James talked to his mother on the telephone. Sophia is a lovely girl.
Most verbs show action, so they are called action verbs .	run, fly, leave, arrive
Some verbs link the subject to a subject completer, so they are called linking verbs .	be, appear, seem, feel, smell, look
Sometimes verbs consist of more than one word. The main verb plus one or more helping verbs .	I have walked to work every day this week. Matthew may go to the party on Saturday. Vincent should ask before he does that.
In most sentences, the subject comes first, followed by the verb. When a sentence begins with THERE or HERE the subject follows the verb.	There is no need to worry. There were children in the room. Here are James and Sophia .
In questions , the subject either follows the verb or is sandwiched between parts of the verb.	Are you there? Do you have any money?

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LEARN MORE

Texts available to use in The SLC English Writing Lab:

<i>Grassroots with Readings</i> , Ninth Edition Susan Fawcett Chapter 6	<i>Evergreen, A Guide to Writing with Readings</i> , Ninth Edition, Susan Fawcett Chapter 25	<i>The Bedford Handbook</i> , Seventh Edition, Diana Hacker Chapter 65
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Online:

['Making sentences' games](#)

[Simple Sentences](#)

[The Simple Sentence](#)

[Simple Sentences: Subject and Predicate](#)

[The Subject](#)

[The Complete Sentence](#)

[Grassroots Companion Site](#)

[Evergreen Companion Site](#)

Don't forget: students can always ask tutors or their teachers for an explanation of anything that's not clear.

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PRACTICE

In these sentences, underline the simple subject and circle the complete subject.

The large black dog chased the car down the street.

The intelligent students were bored by the long lecture.

The long, hard road led to a beautiful valley.

Louisa May Alcott wrote *Little Women*.

Stop!

James and Matthew walked to their friend's house.

In these sentences, place parentheses around any prepositional phrases and circle the complete subject.

The house around the corner is mine.

The book on the table belongs to Lulu.

The rest of the pie belongs to me.

The dark red coat on the chair should be hung in the closet.

The president of the company will lecture on productivity today after lunch.

In these sentences, put an "A" over action verbs and an "L" over linking verbs.

Jose ran all the way to school.

Elaine seems upset about something.

Ed feels terrible today.

My plane leaves for Baltimore at 6:45 this evening.

Something smells bad in your bedroom.

She should have apologized as soon as it happened.

He has done all his homework this semester.

There are three students missing.

Here is your coat.

Are those apples for me?

Do you have any money?