# Comma Usage

## Compound and Complex Sentences

## 1. Compound Sentences

**What is a compound sentence?**

A compound sentence contains two or more complete sentences. We can link these two complete sentences by using a **coordinating conjunction**: *for and nor but or yet so*.

For example:

2 Sentences: *I like pizza.* + *My family eats it every Friday.*

**Compound Sentence:** *I like pizza, and my family eats it every Friday.*

**Place a comma before the coordinating conjunction.**

Examples:

*I want to get an A in English, so I go for tutoring regularly.*

*English is difficult, but the English tutors make it seem easy.*

*The tutors can help with grammar, or they can help us with writing.*

## 2. Complex Sentences

**What is a complex sentence?**

A complex sentence is a sentence with one or more **dependent clauses**.

For Example:

Independent clause

*I love pizza.*

Dependent clause

*(Even though + We never ate it much as a family.)*

= *I love pizza even though we never ate it much as a family.*

**What is a dependent clause?**

A dependent clause is a part of a sentence which cannot be a full sentence on its own, usually because there is a **subordinating conjunction** or ‘connecting word’ at the beginning of the clause. This word signals the reader that the clause is *depending* on more information to complete the full idea.

Examples:

*When I took the class / If you don’t stop doing that / although she forgot*

**If the sentence begins with a dependent clause, we need a comma after the clause.**

Examples:

*Before going to the TLC, Naoe found it hard to pronounce certain letters.*

*After going for conversation practice, Naoe’s spoken English improved.*

**If the dependent clause begins in the middle of the sentence, no comma is needed.**

Examples:

*Naoe’s spoken English improved after going for conversation practice.*

*Naoe can now differentiate between *l* and *r* after going to the pronunciation workshops.*
3. Nonrestrictive Clauses

What is a non-restrictive clause?

A nonrestrictive clause is a relative clause which contains information that is not essential to understand the main idea of a sentence.

For example:

The course was taught by an experienced teacher, who gave me a good grade.

This clause provides extra information about the noun. We can understand the point of the sentence and the role of the noun even without this clause.

Distinguish a non-restrictive relative clause from the main clause using commas at the beginning and end of the clause.

Examples:

The TLC, which is on the 4th floor, provides tutoring in English, and math.

Sasha, who is the full-time Math Advisor, works at all three campuses.

I will make an appointment with Lee, whom I know quite well already.

Practice! Keeping in mind the rules above, decide whether or not the commas are correct in the following sentences. Add or remove commas as needed:

1. Meighan who is the Casa Loma TLC Advisor, also teaches IELTS.

2. The TLC tutors can help you with English, and math and they can also help you with speaking which can be difficult for some.

3. Tutoring, which is free, can help you do better in your studies.

4. Virginia, who is the Waterfront TLC Advisor runs English workshops for nursing students.

5. Once I learned some comma rules it became easier to use them.

6. I used commas more often, after I learned how to do so.

7. While reading Eat, Shoots and Leaves I gained a better understanding of punctuation.