

Building sentences with adverb clauses

Let us practice building sentences with adverb clauses. An adverb clause serves the same function as an adverb. Adverbs are words used to modify verbs. Adverbs can also modify adjectives and other adverbs.

Just like an adjective clause, adverb clauses, too, are dependent or subordinate clauses.

A dependent clause cannot stand alone. It needs to be attached to an independent clause. Like an ordinary adverb, an adverb clause can modify a verb, an adjective or another adverb in the sentence.

Adverb clauses usually introduce ideas such as time, place, cause, reason, contrast, condition etc.

From Coordination to Subordination

Study the following examples.

James was feeling rather unwell.

He decided to consult a doctor.

We can combine these two sentences using a coordinating conjunction.

James was feeling rather unwell and decided to consult a doctor.

However, in this case, the coordination with and does not clearly identify the relationship between the ideas in these clauses. As you can see there is a cause and effect relationship between these two clauses.

To clarify that relationship, we can choose a subordinating conjunction.

As James was feeling rather well, he decided to consult a doctor.

OR Since James was feeling rather unwell, he decided to consult a doctor.

Here the subordinating conjunctions as and since clearly establish the cause and effect relationship between the two clauses. The subordinating conjunction because is also possible here.

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Because he was feeling rather unwell, James decided to consult a doctor.

Another example is given below.

I have bought a chicken. Manuel might stay to lunch.

Here basically we are talking about a precaution – things that we do in order to be ready for possible future situations.

In case is the most appropriate subordinating conjunction that can be used in this situation.

I have bought a chicken in case Manuel stays to lunch.

Note that after in case, we usually use a present tense to refer to the future.

Because can also be used to express the same idea.

I have bought a chicken because Manuel might stay to lunch.