

Simple and Compound Sentences

According to their meaning and word order, sentences are divided into four classes – assertive, imperative, interrogative and exclamatory. But according to their clause structure, sentences can be divided into four different kinds – simple, compound, complex and compound-complex.

The Simple sentence

Look at the following sentences.

The sky is blue.

The cow gives milk.

The sports meet will be held tomorrow.

These sentences have only one subject and one predicate each. A sentence which has only one subject and one predicate is called a simple sentence.

The Compound sentence

Read the following sentences

He went to the airport and boarded the evening flight.

You can have tea or coffee.

He went to the store, bought some books and came back.

The sentence 1 has two parts: *He went to the airport* and *he boarded the evening flight* joined by the coordinating conjunction and. Each part has its own subject and predicate and therefore each is a clause. Moreover, they are clauses of equal rank or importance, independent of each other. Such clauses are called co-ordinate clauses.

Sentence 2 is a combination of two independent clauses of equal rank: *you can have tea* and *you can have coffee*, joined together by the coordinating conjunction or. Sentence 3 has three independent clauses of equal rank – *He went to the store*, *he bought some books*, *he came back* – and these are joined together by the coordinating conjunction and.

Simple and Compound Sentences

A sentence which has two or more coordinate clauses is called a compound sentence.