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| **Grammar Masters: Teacher’s Notes**  **Topic: Sentence Structure** |
| Clauses are the building blocks of English sentences, groups of words that contain a [subject](http://www.theschoolrun.com/what-are-subject-and-object) and a verb.  To understand clauses, it is a good idea to review the different components that make up a sentence (subject and verb).  A clause is a group of words that contain a subject (the [noun](http://www.theschoolrun.com/what-is-a-noun) or [pronoun](http://www.theschoolrun.com/what-is-a-pronoun) about which something is being said, usually the doer of the action) and a [verb](http://www.theschoolrun.com/powerful-verbs-explained) (an action). An example of a clause is: The fast, red squirrel darted up a tree. The subject of this clause is the squirrel and the verb is darted. This can also be called a simple sentence.  A main clause contains a subject and a verb and can stand alone (makes grammatical sense on its own).  A **subordinate clause** can contain a subject and a verb, but it needs to be attached to a main clause because it **cannot make grammatical sense on its own**.  Main clauses don't always have to come before subordinate clauses in sentences. Subordinate clauses can be situated in different places within a sentence. The beginning (this clause is separated with a comma), middle (also known as an embedded clause – this can also be a relative clause when it begins with a relative pronoun) and at the end (does not usually require commas as the subordinating conjunction joins the clauses).  Common subordinating conjunctions:  after, against, in that, though, although, like, unless, as, now that, until, once, what, provided, whatever, because, rather than, when, before, seeing that, whether, even though, since, where ever, so that, while, except that, supposing, why, however, than, without, if, yet. |

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