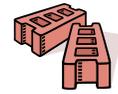# Sentences & Their Building Blocks

<u>**WHAT STRUCTURE CAN SENTENCES TAKE?**</u>

● Simple sentence: Contains one independent clause
● Compound sentence: Contains at least two independent clauses
● Complex sentence: Contains one independent & at least one dependent clause
● Compound-Complex sentence: Contains at least two independent & at least one dependent clause

> ***Uh-oh. They're talking about clauses, and I need to know how those differ from phrases.
We'll have to come back to these later!***

<u>**PHRASES**</u>**: A group of related words that lacks a subject or predicate or both, and that acts as a
single part of speech (see next page). Several common types of phrases include the following:**

Prepositional Phrase: consists of a preposition and its object, plus any modifiers. They function as
adjectives, adverbs, and occasionally nouns. *("The boy <u>in green</u> stood up." – Adjective; "We could
come back <u>for the second show</u>." – Adverb)*

Infinitive Phrase: consists of an infinitive and its object, plus any modifiers, and sometimes includes
a subject. They function as nouns, adjectives, and adverbs.*("I'd hate <u>to go all the way home</u>." – Noun)*

Participial Phrase: consists of a participle and its object, plus any modifiers. They function as
adjectives and adverbs. *("The man <u>collecting tickets</u> says we may not be too late." – Adjective)*

Gerund Phrase: These are participial phrases that function as nouns. *("<u>Missing the beginning</u> is a
bad idea.")*

<u>**CLAUSES**</u>**: A group of related words containing a subject and a predicate.**

Independent Clause: Can stand alone as a sentence

Dependent Clause: Cannot stand alone as a sentence. They may function as adjectives,
                              adverbs, or nouns.

> **Adjective clause** modifies nouns or pronouns: *"The car <u>that hit him</u> was running a red light."*
(Clause modifies "car").

> **Adverb clause** modifies verbs, adjectives, or adverbs, or whole clauses or sentences: *"The car
hit him <u>when it ran a red light</u>." (Clause modifies "hit").*

> **Noun clause** functions as subjects, objects, or complements: *"<u>Whoever was driving</u> should be
arrested." (Clause is subject of the sentence).*

So what are all these parts of speech I see listed under Phrases?!

Preposition: A part of speech that is used to show the relationship of a noun or the object of the preposition to some other word in the sentence.

> **Examples:** at times, between us, because of rain, before class
> **Example**: The answer is *in* the book. (Shows relationship of "book" to the noun "answer")
>
> **Can show direction:**   "John returned *to* his house and jumped *into* the water."
> **Can show location:**   "The glass is *on* the table *in* the corner."
> **Can show spatial relation:** "His hat is *off*." "We're *behind* you all the way."
> **Can show time, place or introduce objects**:
> >   "My plane leaves *at* noon."
> >   "I'm looking *for* my keys."
> >   "I don't approve *of* his speech."
> >   "You didn't laugh *at* his joke."

Infinitive: An infinitive is a verbal consisting of the word *to* plus a verb (in its simplest "stem" form) and functioning as a noun, adjective, or adverb.

- *To wait* seemed foolish when decisive action was required. (subject)
- Everyone wanted *to go*. (direct object)
- His ambition is *to fly*. (subject complement)
- He lacked the strength *to resist*. (adjective)
- We must study *to learn*. (adverb)

Be sure not to confuse an infinitive--a verbal consisting of *to* plus a verb--with a prepositional phrase beginning with *to*, which consists of *to* plus a noun or pronoun and any modifiers.

> **Infinitives:** to fly, to draw, to become, to enter, to stand, to catch, to belong
> **Prepositional Phrases:** to him, to the committee, to my house, to the mountains, to us

Participal: A participle is a verbal that is **used as an adjective** and most often ends in *-ing* or *-ed*. Since they function as adjectives, participles modify nouns or pronouns. There are two types of participles: present participles (end in –ing) and past participles (end in *-ed*, *-en*, *-d*, *-t*, or *-n*, as in the words *asked*, *eaten*, *saved*, *dealt*, and *seen)*.

- The *crying* baby had a wet diaper.
- *Shaken*, he walked away from the *wrecked* car.
- The *burning* log fell off the fire.
- *Smiling*, she hugged the *panting* dog.

Gerund: A gerund is a verbal that ends in *-ing* and **functions as a noun**. It occupies positions in a sentence that a noun would: subject, direct object, subject complement, and object of preposition.

- *Traveling* might satisfy your desire for new experiences. (subject)
- They do not appreciate my *singing*. (direct object)
- My cat's favorite activity is *sleeping*. (subject complement)
- The police arrested him for *speeding*. (object of preposition)