



**Source:** Dr. M. Dickerson (date unknown) Clauses handout, 13-09-18,  
<http://www.bpi.edu/ourpages/auto/2011/9/16/58978302/Clauses.pdf>.

Adverb clauses: how to make them and how to use them  
Clause order  
Essential or nonessential adverb clauses

Adverb clauses (also called adverbial clauses) tell you something about the relationship between the verb in the main clause and the verb in the adverb clause. Adverb clauses are always dependent clauses, in that they need a main clause to make sense. There are many different types of words that could introduce an adjective clause. They are usually words which say something about the relationship of time, place or condition between the two verbs. Some words which could introduce an adverb clause are: during, while, since, when, because or if (Dr. M. Dickerson: 6).

Adverb clauses can have different positions in a sentence, and can be either essential or nonessential (Dr. M. Dickerson: 8).

#### **Adverb clause, main clause**

We can put the adverb clause before the main clause. If we do this, we need to put a comma after the adverb clause. For example: if I am very tired, I will go to bed early. The adverb clause is a dependent clause because it needs the main clause to make sense.

#### **Main clause, adverb clause, main clause**

You can also put your adverb clause in the middle of your main clause. For example: I, while walking in the woods, saw a bear. Your main clause is 'I saw a bear'. Your adverb clause interrupts your main clause to give some extra information. You have to put the adverb clause between commas in this case (Dr. M. Dickerson: 8).

#### **Main clause, adverb clause with nonessential clauses**

You can also put your adverb clause after your main clause. If you use a comma then depends on if your clause is essential or nonessential. For example: our flight was delayed after the storm started. In this case you are giving essential information, so you don't use a comma (Dr. M. Dickerson: 8).

### **Main clause, adverb clause with essential clauses**

An adverb clause at the end of a sentence can also be nonessential. This means it gives extra information, but it isn't necessary to fully understand the sentence. If this is the case, you use a comma before the adverb clause. For example: We arrived at 9pm, which was apparently too late (Dr. M. Dickerson: 8).

*See these ASK documents for additional information:*

*Noun clauses:*

*Clause structures:*

*Adjective clauses:*