WHAT IS SUBORDINATION?

Subordination is used to combine sentences to add variety to your writing. Subordination combines sentences so that one becomes more important than the other. Subordinate clauses--also called dependent clauses--contain subordinating conjunctions.

COMMON SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

There are specific words that act as subordinating conjunctions. You can use these words to start a sentence or place them in the middle of your sentence.

before whichever although during even
before when after while

A SUBORDINATE CLAUSE CANNOT STAND ALONE

»»»»»»»»»»»» ON ITS OWN »»»»»»»»»»»»

Yikes! That would be a fragment!

HOW TO ATTACH A SUBORDINATE CLAUSE TO A MAIN CLAUSE LIKE A BOSS

When you attach a subordinate clause to a main clause and place it at the beginning of the sentence, you must use a comma--just like this sentence.

subordinate clause + , (comma) + main clause

Do not use a comma when you attach a subordinate clause to a main clause and place it in the middle of the sentence--just like this sentence.

main clause + subordinate clause (no comma)
**SUBORDINATION EXAMPLES**

Reminder: If the subordinating conjunction comes at the **beginning** of the sentence, use a comma after that clause. If the subordinating conjunction comes in the **middle** of the sentence, no comma is needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>without subordinator</th>
<th>Work can be demanding. I really enjoy it.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sentence opens with subordinator</td>
<td><strong>Although</strong> work can be demanding, I really enjoy it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(use a comma)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>without subordinator</td>
<td>Kate loves teaching. It is an extremely rewarding profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subordinator comes in middle of</td>
<td>Kate loves teaching <strong>because</strong> it is an extremely rewarding profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentence (don't use a comma)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Occasionally you will use a comma before a subordinator when you are showing a direct **contrast** in ideas.

Example:
The teacher said we would be taking a test, **although** it wasn't on the syllabus.

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**PRACTICE WITH SUBORDINATION**

Try your hand at combining these sentences. Use a different strategy for each:

1. Combine using a subordinating conjunction at the **beginning** of the sentence:
   
   I like pie and cake. I can't stand cookies.

2. Combine using a subordinating conjunction in the **middle** of the sentence:
   
   My mother needed cream for her coffee. She prefers her coffee on the weak side.

3. Combine using a subordinating conjunction at the **beginning** of the sentence:
   
   My mother needed cream for her coffee. I went to the store and purchased some.

Just remember that "sub" means under. With subordination, you’re putting the importance of one part of the sentence "under" the other.