

## Functions of Clauses in English

- Clauses are defined as grammatical structures that contain a subject and a predicate. There are three forms of clauses in English:

### 1. Noun clause

### 2. Adjective clause

### 3. Adverb clause

- Each grammatical form of clause in English performs distinct grammatical functions.

## 1. Noun clauses

- Noun clauses are defined as subordinate clauses formed by a subordinating conjunction followed by a clause. The subordinating conjunctions in English that introduce noun clauses are **that**, **Ø**, **if**, **whether**, **wh- words**, and **wh-ever words**. For example, the following italicized clauses are examples of noun clauses:

1. The library will send a bill to *whoever damaged this book*.
2. Whether you will pay for the damage is not even a question.
3. The judge has given that you behaved well after your arrest some consideration.

- Noun clauses perform nominal functions, or functions prototypically performed by noun phrases. The nine main functions of noun clauses in English grammar are:

1. Subject
2. Subject complement
3. Direct object
4. Object complement
5. Indirect object
6. Prepositional complement
7. Adjective phrase complement
8. Noun phrase complement
9. Appositive

- Noun clauses are also referred to as content clauses.

## 2. Adjective Clauses

- Adjective clauses are defined as subordinate clauses formed by a subordinating conjunction followed by a clause. The subordinating conjunctions in English that introduce adjective clauses are **who**, **whom**, **that**, **Ø**, **which**, **whose**, **when**, and **where**. For example, the following italicized clauses are examples of adjective clauses:

1. The woman that works in the bakery is my neighbor.
  2. The car you hit belongs to the man whose daughter is my classmate.
  3. The restaurant where you left your purse is known for its unique pasta dishes.
- The primary grammatical function of adjective clauses is noun phrase modifier.
  - Noun phrase modifiers are defined as words, phrases, and clauses that describe or modify a noun.

### 3. Adverb Clauses

- Adverb clauses are defined as **subordinate clauses** formed by a subordinating conjunction followed by a clause. Some of the more common subordinating conjunctions in English that introduce adverb clauses include:
  1. after
  2. although
  3. because
  4. before
  5. even though
  6. if
  7. once
  8. since
  9. so that
  10. though
  11. unless
  12. until
  13. when
  14. whereas
  15. while

For example, the following italicized clauses are examples of adverb clauses:

1. *After she gave the baby a bath*, she decided to take a nap.
2. The girl cannot usually eat beef stew *because she is allergic to carrots*.
3. The couple has been saving money *so that they can go on a vacation*.

- All adverb clauses perform the grammatical function of **adjunct adverbial**. Adjunct adverbials are words, phrases, and clauses that modify or describe an entire clause by providing additional information about **time, place, manner, condition, purpose, reason, result, and concession**.

❖ **Relative Clause** : A relative clause begins with a **relative pronoun**, such as: **whom, who, whose, which, why, where, or when**.

- A relative clause describes a noun and connects that noun to the main clause in order to express a complete idea.

- For instance, in the sentence, “My cat who likes bread crumbs is a black cat”, the clause —who likes bread crumbs, contains the relative pronoun —**who**.
- For another example, in the sentence, —My cousin is employed by Walmart, where he works with enthusiasm, —where is the relative adverb in the clause —where he works with enthusiasm.