

Adverb clauses

Adverb clauses are a type of subordinate clauses. They start with a subordinating conjunction such as *when, if, although...* These are called subordinating conjunctions because they link two clauses of unequal importance: a main clause and a subordinate clause:

I went to bed early because I was tired.

"I went to bed early" is the main clause, and "because I was tired" is a subordinate clause, introduced by the subordinating conjunction "because".

Some subordinating conjunctions consist of one word "because, before, since..." and others of two or more words "as if, so that, in order to...".

The function of adverb clauses is similar to that of an adverb:

I bought the tickets yesterday.

I bought the tickets when I had money.

Both the adverb "yesterday" and the subordinate clause "when I had money" function as an adverb of the main clause, they explain *when* I bought the tickets.

The meanings expressed by subordinating conjunctions include: time, place, manner, purpose, cause/reason, result, condition, contrast/concession, and comparison.

Many subordinate adverb clauses can come before or after the main clause. When the adverb clause begins the sentence, we use a comma to separate the two clauses, but when the adverb clause finishes the sentence, we don't use a comma.

Because I was tired, I went to bed early.

I went to bed early because I was tired.

Some adverb clauses (e.g. those beginning with the conjunctions *as if, as though, where, so that*) can only come after the main clause:

He wanted to stay where he had always lived.

Where he had always lived, he wanted to stay.

Types of adverb clauses

There are time, place, manner, purpose, cause/reason, result, condition, contrast/concession, and comparison clauses.