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Quick and Handy Grammar Review: Adverb Clauses

Phrases and Clauses: A **phrase** is a *group of words that does not form a complete sentence*.

A **clause** is a *group of words (with a subject and a verb) that forms a complete sentence*.

There are two types of clauses: an *independent* clause, which is a complete sentence, and a *dependent* clause, which requires the presence of an independent clause to make up a complete sentence. Dependent clauses serve the function of a noun, adverb, or adjective.

In this unit, we will discuss **Adverb Clauses of Time**.

There are usually two possible structures to the sentences that use adverb clauses of time:

1. Adverb + subject + verb (,) subject + verb.
2. Subject + verb (no punctuation) adverb + subject + verb

Time words and phrases:

| Term | Notes | Use in the present | Use in the past | Use in the future |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| after when once as soon as | These four phrases are similar in use. <i>As soon as</i> implies more immediacy. <i>Once</i> is less common, used more in poetry. | Term SV, SV. The verbs are both in the simple present. | Term SV, SV. The verbs are both used in the simple past [some strict grammar books require the use of the past perfect in the time clause]. | Term SV, SV. The verb in the time clause is used in the simple present; in the other clause, the simple future is used. |
| before | | Term SV, SV. The verbs are both in the simple present. | Term SV, SV. The verbs are both used in the simple past. | Term SV, SV. The verb in the time clause is used in the simple present; in the other clause, the simple future is used. |
| while as | These two phrases are similar in use. <i>While</i> is more common. | <i>While</i> and <i>as</i> are followed by the present progressive. The other clause is in the simple present. | <i>While</i> and <i>as</i> are followed by the past progressive. The other clause is in the simple past. | <i>While</i> and <i>as</i> are followed by the present progressive. The other clause is in the simple future. |
| until | Until never begins a sentence. It is always used in the middle. | SV until SV. Both verbs are in the simple present. | SV until SV. Both verbs are in the simple past. | SV until SV. The verb in the first clause is in the simple future. The verb in the second clause is in the simple present. |
| since | Since is only used for past meaning. | Not used. | SV since SV. The verb in the first clause is in the <i>present perfect</i> (or <i>present perfect progressive</i>). The verb in the second clause is in the simple past. | Not used. |

| | | | | |
|--------------------|--|--|--|---|
| whenever | | Whenever SV, SV. Simple present in both clauses. | Whenever SV, SV. Simple past in both clauses. | Not used. |
| every time | As with other terms (every night, every month, every summer), <i>every</i> takes the simple tense. | Every SV, SV. Simple present in both tenses. | Every SV, SV. Simple past in both tenses. | Not used. |
| as long as | As long as is usually used in the middle of the sentence. It is often used with the verb <i>live</i> . | Not used. | Not used. | SV as long as SV The verb in the first clause is in the simple future; the other verb is in the simple present. |
| by the time | A mental bell should ring in your head indicating the use of the <i>past perfect tense</i> . It is used when you are late . | By the time SV, SV. (rarely used) Simple present, simple present. | By the time SV, SV. The verb in the time clause is in the simple past; the other verb is in the past perfect . | By the time SV, SV. (rarely used) The verb in the time clause is in the simple present; the other verb is in the future perfect . |

Study these examples (and note which adverb clauses only have one structural possibility):

1. After I get home, I always check my email. / I always check my email after I get home.
2. When she lived in Montreal, she spoke French every day. / She spoke French every day when she lived in Montreal.
3. As soon as Bob finishes his studies, he will move back to England. / Bob will move back to English as soon as he finishes his studies.
4. Before Vicky goes to bed, she has a cup of warm milk. / Vicky has a cup of warm milk before she goes to bed.
5. Before Edward finished his dinner, he had to leave. / Edward had to leave before he finished his dinner.
6. Before Isis leaves for China, she will call you. / Isis will call you before she leaves for China.
7. While I was studying for the exam, the phone rang. / The phone rang while I was studying for the exam.
8. As Ashley was leaving the house, she saw a squirrel on the lawn. / Ashley saw a squirrel on the lawn as she was leaving the house.
9. Frank usually works until he finishes his tasks.
10. I will love you until I die.
11. Leslie has worked at Ninley's since she came to Minnesota..
12. Omar has lived on 66th Street since he moved to Vancouver.
13. Whenever I see my old boss, I get nervous. / I get nervous whenever I see my old boss.
14. Whenever Jack walked to another part of the city, he got lost. / Jack got lost whenever he walked to another part of the city.
15. Every time Peter calls me, we talk for an hour. / Peter and I talk for an hour whenever he calls me.
16. Every time Rachel went to the library, she met Juan. / Rachel met Juan every time she went to the library.
17. I will never call you again as long as I live.
18. By the time Mel got to the theater, the film had already started. / The film had already started by the time Mel got to the theater.
19. By the time the doctor got to the emergency room, the patient had died. / The patient had died by the time the doctor got to the emergency room.
20. By the time Sharon gets home tonight, Aunt Sally will have left. / Aunt Sally will have left by the time Sharon gets home tonight.

Exercise 1:

Error Correction. Correct the errors in the following sentences.

1. While Nestor walking to school, he was meeting his teacher.

2. As I fell asleep last night, I was seeing a bright light out the window.

3. When Jack saw Maria, he was falling in love.

4. By the time Carl had arrived home, his mother left.

5. I love you until you will die.

6. Whenever I am seeing Brett, I am getting sad.

7. Before he was waking up yesterday, he had a cup of coffee.

8. I work until I will finish the job.

9. By the time Kendrick had turned on the TV, the program had been ended.

10. Shirley worked at that company since she has moved to Connecticut.

Exercise 2:

Insert the correct adverb into the blanks. Choose from the following list (adverbs can be used more than once):

until when by the time after as long as while

1. I will never go to that restaurant again _____ I live.
2. I will not come to your house _____ you apologize.
3. She was fired _____ they found out she had stolen \$500.
4. _____ the team lost its first game, all the players were sad.
5. _____ my sister got home last night, I had already gone to bed.
6. _____ Hanna ate breakfast, she washed the dishes.
7. _____ my mother came, I had already left.
8. Mary will stay with the baby _____ the babysitter comes.
9. _____ Josie was sleeping last night, she had an incredible dream.
10. _____ John's mother finishes cooking school, she will get a job in a restaurant.

Exercise 3:

Here are Lisa's activities yesterday.

S = Subject

V = Verb

| | |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| 7:00 | came home |
| 7:10 | checked her messages |
| 7:20 | drank a glass of iced tea |
| 7:21 | microwaved a frozen meal |
| 7:30–7:40 | ate dinner |
| 7:30–7:40 | read the newspaper |
| 8:00 | her favorite TV program started |
| 8:05 | turned on the television |
| 9:00 | fell asleep on the couch |

Based on the time schedule, make sentences with these words:

1. At precisely 7:32 last night, S V
2. While S V, S V (7:30–7:40)
3. By the time S V, S V (8:00–8:05)
4. As soon as S V, S V (7:00–7:10)
5. Before S V, S V (7:20–7:21)

Exercise 4:

Are the following sentences correct? Circle the correct answers on the right.

- | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|
| 1. I have never been visiting that country. | Yes | No |
| 2. Every summer she is going to the beach. | Yes | No |
| 3. I have loved you since I first saw your beautiful eyes. | Yes | No |
| 4. Next Sunday at 3:00 p.m., she will be sitting in a movie theatre. | Yes | No |
| 5. In 2020, Hyunseon will be return to his country. | Yes | No |
| 6. Henry's brother has been in jail since 2006. | Yes | No |
| 7. By the time Ray got to the airport, the plane left. | Yes | No |
| 8. While John driving to school, he was drinking coffee. | Yes | No |
| 9. After Maria takes Biology and History, she takes Physics. | Yes | No |
| 10. Kathy was still sleeping at 6:00 a.m. yesterday. | Yes | No |

Exercise 5:

Choose the appropriate verb tense (the common one) to use with the following time phrases.

1. Last year
a. simple present b. simple future c. simple past d. past progressive
2. Last night at exactly 7:00 p.m.
a. simple present b. simple future c. simple past d. past progressive
3. Tomorrow night at precisely 9:30 p.m.
a. future progressive b. simple future c. simple past d. past progressive
4. Every afternoon (including this afternoon)
a. simple present b. simple future c. simple past d. present progressive
5. Since
a. simple present b. simple past c. present perfect d. present progressive
6. While
a. simple present b. simple past c. simple past d. past progressive
7. In 1981
a. simple present b. simple future c. simple past d. past progressive
8. In 2025
a. simple present b. simple future c. simple past d. present progressive
9. This semester
a. simple present b. simple future c. present progressive d. past progressive
10. By the time
a. simple present b. past perfect c. simple past d. past progressive

Exercise 6:

Here are John Brown's activities on Thursday night:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 6:00–6:50 | Eats dinner |
| 6:00–6:50 | Talks to his family about the blizzard |
| 6:55 | His mother calls |
| 7:00 | Washes his face |
| 7:05–7:15 | Waits for his brother |
| 7:15 | His brother arrives |
| 7:15 | Leaves the house |
| 7:30 | The movie starts |
| 7:40 | Arrives at the movie theatre |

S = Subject

V = Verb

Write sentences with the following constructions:

*Pretend that the actions happened yesterday.
The sentences should be in the past.*

1. At precisely 6:45 last night, S V

2. While S V, S V (6:30–6:40)

3. Before S V, S V (6:32–7:00)

4. As soon as S V, S V (7:15)

5. By the time S V, S V (7:30–7:40)

*Pretend that the actions will happen tomorrow.
Use the future tense.*

1. As soon as S V, S V (7:15)

2. By the time S V, S V (7:30–7:40)

3. While S V, S V (6:00–6:50)

4. After S V, S V (7:00–7:15)

5. At precisely 6:55 tomorrow, S V

Exercise 7:

Choose the appropriate verb tense (the common one) to use with the following time clauses.

1. While I _____ hard tomorrow, I will think of you, you lazy dog.
a. will work b. am working c. work d. will be working
2. _____ I saw Kristina for the first time, I thought she had a mustache.
a. if b. when c. while d. after
3. As soon as I get home, I _____ you.
a. will call b. call c. am going call d. calling
4. Yesterday, after I _____ dinner, my sister came over.
a. will finish b. finish c. had finished d. finishing
5. The movie _____ by the time I got to the theater.
a. started b. had started c. starts d. was start
6. I _____ you since I _____ you.
a. have hated / met b. hate / me c. have hated / have met d. will hate / meet
7. Yesterday, while I _____ dinner, my mother _____.
a. ate / called b. was eat / called c. was eating / was calling d. was eating / called.
8. Tomorrow, while I _____ dinner, I _____ the newspaper.
a. eat / read b. am eating / will read c. eating / will read d. will be reading / will read.
9. By the time I got to the game, it _____.
a. had started b. has started c. will have started d. started e. starts
10. I _____ you when I arrive in Korea.
a. would call b. will call c. called d. call e. calls

Exercise 8:

Choose the appropriate verb tense (the common one) to use with the following time clauses.

1. Yesterday at 8:00 p.m., _____.
a. she will study b. she studies c. she was studying d. she had studied
2. Tomorrow after I _____ class, I will go to that new restaurant.
a. finishes b. will finish c. have finished d. finish
3. Every time I _____ his face, I get sick to my stomach.
a. will see b. saw c. see d. have seen
4. Two days ago, their car broke down while they _____ to Philadelphia..
a. drove b. was driving c. were driving d. drive
5. Tomorrow, while I _____, I will think of you watching TV on the couch.
a. will be working b. am working c. works d. worked
6. I will call you _____ I get back from the party.
a. because b. as soon as c. while d. as
7. She has not even looked at another man _____ she married Tom two weeks ago.
a. since b. when c. before d. while
8. I will love you _____ I die.
a. as soon as b. after c. until d. when
9. The fire alarm rang _____ Ned was working in his office yesterday.
a. while b. as soon as c. until d. before
10. By the time Oscar got to the airport, the plane _____.
a. had already left b. left c. will leave d. leaving