

3 SIMPLE SENTENCE S+V_i+C_s

After studying through this chapter, you are expected to be able to write simple sentences with Pattern S+V_i+C_s

Some verbs are sometimes followed by a subject complement to make a predicate. In this case, the complement is a necessary component of the predicate. In other words, it can not be deleted. If it is omitted from the predicate, the meaning of the whole sentence will alter drastically. In some cases, without a complement, a verb will totally fail to form a predicate. Study the following sentences critically.

No	Sentence
1	God is merciful.
2	God is.
3	My sister got tired.
4	My sister got. *

The verbs in Sentences 1 and 3 are each followed by a complement: “merciful” and “tired,” respectively. If the complement “merciful” is omitted from the predicate, the sentence becomes “God is,” as in Sentence 2, meaning “God exists.” This sentence has a completely different meaning from Sentence 1. Furthermore, if the complement “tired” is removed from Sentence 3, it becomes “My sister got,” as in Sentence 4. This sentence is marked with an asterisk (*), meaning that it is considered incorrect grammatically. Sentence 4 is ungrammatical since the verb fails to form a predicate; therefore, it is not a sentence at all.

A complement is different from an adverb. While an adverb is usually not a necessary part of a predicate, a complement constitutes a required component of a predicate. If a complement is omitted from a predicate of a sentence, either the meaning of the sentence will change greatly or the remaining verb in the predicate will fail to form a meaningful, grammatical predicate.

A complement is not the same as an object, either. For one thing, a subject complement (C_s) refers to the subject of the sentence, while an object does not. Because of this, the complement and the subject of a sentence constitute one entity. On the other hand, an object of a verb and the subject of the sentence can not constitute one entity. Study the sentences below analytically.

No	Subject	Verb	Object	Complement
5	Mary	is		a doctor.
6	Molly	needs	a doctor.	
7	John	became		a math teacher.
8	Jack	helped	a math teacher.	

In Sentence 5, “a doctor” functions as a complement. It refers back to the subject, “Mary.” The subject “Mary” and the complement “a doctor” are the same person; they both refer to the same entity. On the other hand, “a doctor” in Sentence 6 is an object to the verb “needs.” The subject of the sentence “Molly” and the object “a doctor” are obviously not the same person; they do not refer to the same entity. Similarly, in Sentence 7 “a computer programmer” is a complement, referring back to the subject “John.” The subject and the complement are the same person. On the other hand, in Sentence 8 “a math teacher” is an object of the verb “helped.” The subject of the sentence “Jack” and the object “a math teacher” do not constitute the same entity. The point to be kept in mind is that a complement is not the same as either an adverb or an object. Now, you can study the sentences below.

No	Subject	Verb	Complement
9	This book	is	useful.
10	My sister	is	quite diligent.
11	The young boy	was	very sick.
12	The girls	were	really excited.
13	This	is	a very useful book.
14	My diligent sister	is	a computer programmer.
15	The sick boy	was	the son of a famous painter.
16	The excited girls	were	professional basket-ball players.

If you study the sentences above very carefully, you will find out that a subject complement might take at least two forms: adjective or adjective phrase (such as in Sentences 9 to 12) and noun or noun phrase (such as in Sentences 13 to 16).

Activity 3.1

Underline the verb and the complement in each sentence.

1. Coke was an army officer last year.
2. However, now he is a prisoner.
3. He was a very healthy man.
4. But now he is not quite healthy any longer.
5. Jack's life was rather difficult ten years ago.
6. At that time, he was a trucker.
7. However, his life is a lot better now.
8. He is now a trucking businessman.
9. His life is not easier now, but it is more enjoyable.

So far, most of the verbs followed by a subject complement discussed in this chapter are variants of the verb “to be,” such as *is, am, are, was, were*. Is it the case that only the verb “to be” is followed by a complement? No. Actually, some other verbs quite often take a complement to make a predicate. Below are a number of verbs which might be followed by a complement. Remember that the list is not exhaustive; there are other verbs which may take a complement besides those listed below.

Verb	Example
appear	The girls appeared nervous.
be	We have been curious.
become	My brother will become a teacher someday.
come	My dreams have come true.
fall	My sister fell sick.
feel	I feel healthy.
get	They will get confused.
go	I know something went wrong.
grow	My grandfather is growing old.
keep	Keep quiet. Someone's knocking on the door.
look	The boys looked frightened.
prove	She proved loyal to her country.
remain	The case remains an unsolved mystery.
seem	You seem interested.
smell	The cake smelled delicious.
sound	You don't sound happy.
stay	You should stay alert.
taste	The soup tasted strange.
turn	Her face suddenly turned red.
...	

Activity 3.2

Supply an adjective subject complement.

1. My brother appears _____.

2. My sister will prove _____.
3. My girlfriend feels _____.
4. Don't get _____, please.
5. Everyone has gone _____.
6. My mother looked _____.
7. Everyone in the room remained _____.
8. My father seems _____.
9. Jack did not sound _____.

Activity 3.3

Supply a noun subject complement.

1. Jack was _____.
2. My father will not become _____.
3. My sister proves _____.
4. I will remain _____.
5. Molly has been _____ for years.
6. My brother became _____ three years ago.
7. My girlfriend proved _____.
8. Her books remain _____.
9. My boyfriend will be _____ someday.

Activity 3.4

Construct sentences with Pattern S+V_i+C_s.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____

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