

# SENTENCE VARIETY



College of the  
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WRITING LAB

**INTRODUCTION:** You can revise awkward passages and add variety to your work by using three basic sentence forms.

## **Simple sentences have one independent clause:**

- *A simple sentence has one complete idea.*
- *The dog ate my homework.*
- *I know that.*

## **Compound sentences have two (or more) independent clauses, and they are joined by a comma and a coordinating conjunction or by a semicolon:**

- *Compound sentences show relationships; they can add flavor and context to your descriptions.*
- *My teacher said my sentences were choppy, but now they have a better flow.*
- *The dog ate my homework, and it is frustrating; she is only a pup.*

## **A complex sentence is created when an independent clause is introduced or modified by a dependent clause:**

- *Because a dependent clause is a fragment if left standing alone, it must be attached to an independent clause for support.*
- *I can't control my pup because she is too young to know better.*
- *Since my pup ate my homework several times before, my teacher will never believe me this time.*