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Comma Placement

A comma is required when the time clause comes before the independent clause.

HANDY TIP

Correct verb tense is an important point to consider when writing time clauses. The important points to remember are as follows:

- When the verb of the time clause is in present form, the verb in the main clause must also be present or future form.
- **Example:** While displaying symptoms of fever and rash, you are still infectious.
- When the verb of the time clause is in past form, the verb in the main clause must also be in past form.
- **Example:** When the patient received his results, he fainted.
- When the verb in the main clause is in present perfect form, the verb of the time clause must be in present perfect form.

Example: While the patient has been in hospital, his condition has steadily improved.

Wrong X

Today, the couple presented at my clinic. Mrs. Conway informed me that her home ovulation prediction test showed positive.

Right ✓

When the couple presented at my clinic today, Mrs. Conway informed me that her home ovulation prediction test showed positive.

Today, when the couple presented at my clinic, Mrs. Conway informed me that her home ovulation prediction test showed positive.

Reason

Explanation: To demonstrate a higher level of English proficiency, this

information should be expressed in a complex sentence rather than two simple sentences.

Wrong X

The patient has received a prosthetic heart valve 12 months ago.

Right ✓

The patient received a prosthetic heart valve 12 months ago.

Reason

Explanation: has received is present perfect, but simple past is required with the time marker ago.

Wrong X

I first saw Mrs. Smythe at my clinic last week, she urgently needed a new partial denture.

Right ✓

When I first saw Mrs. Smythe at my clinic last week, she urgently needed a new partial denture. (best choice)

I first saw Mrs. Smythe at my clinic last week and she urgently needed a new partial denture.

Reason

Explanation: An adverb of time such as when required to connect these two independent clauses.

REDUCED & PARTICIPLE CLAUSES

Reduced Relative Clauses

Clarity and conciseness can be achieved by using “reduced relative clauses” where the relative pronoun and other words can be removed. Reducing the

clause will make your writing more concise and add to sentence variety, which will be noted by your OET examiner.

Form

To create a reduced clause, replace the subject and verb with a past or present participle.

HANDY TIP

Refer to your favourite grammar text book or website for full details of how use this complex structure.

Case Notes

Mrs V

Epigastric pain → spreading posteriorly to spine

Full Clause

Mrs V has been suffering from epigastric pain, which radiates posteriorly to her spine.

Reduced Clause

Mrs V has been suffering from epigastric pain, ~~which radiates~~ radiating posteriorly to her spine.

Case Notes

Ms G

Occupation: Financial Planner C/O inability to “switch off”

Resulting symptoms

stress, tiredness, anxiety, depression

Full Clause

Ms G is a financial planner who has experienced difficulty switching off after work, which has led to stress, lethargy, anxiety and depression.

Reduced Clause

Ms G is a financial planner who has experienced difficulty switching off after work, leading to stress, lethargy, anxiety and depression.

Case Notes

Mr K

DOB: 20/08/51

Occupation: Management consultant (retired)

Dx: ? pancreatic malignancy

Full Clause

Thank you for seeing Mr K, a 68-year-old retired management consultant, who requires urgent investigation due to possible pancreatic malignancy.

Reduced Clause

Thank you for seeing Mr K, a 68-year-old retired management consultant, requiring urgent investigation due to possible pancreatic malignancy.

Case Notes

X-ray (Today) delayed → attending orderly can no longer assist—asked to assist with image intensifier procedure.

Full Clause

The X-ray, which was originally scheduled for today, was delayed when the orderly in attendance was called away to assist with an urgent image intensifier procedure.

Reduced Clause

The X-ray, originally scheduled for today, was delayed when the orderly in attendance was called away to assist with an urgent image intensifier procedure.

Case Notes

Pt notified of delay → aggressive, angry at postponement – threw chair in waiting room

Full Clause

When he was told of the delay, Mr Jenkins became angry and threw a chair in the waiting room.

Reduced Clause

When told of the delay, Mr Jenkins became angry and threw a chair in the waiting room.

Case Notes

Plan: recommend exercise caution, ensure security present during examination

Full Clause

Please ensure care is taken when you X-ray this patient and that security is present.

Reduced Clause

Please ensure care is taken when X-raying this patient and that security is present.

Participle Clauses

Participle clauses also enable us to say information in a more succinct way by eliminating unnecessary information and help to increase the degree of formality in our writing, which is the main reason to use a participle clause. They are used to express condition, reason, cause and contrast. They can be used when the participle and the verb in the main clause have the same subject.

Standard formations are:

- present participles ---ing
- past participles ---ed
- perfect participles (having + ed)
- Participle clauses after conjunctions and prepositions: It is also common for participle clauses, especially with -ing, to follow conjunctions and prepositions such as before, after, instead of, on, since, when, while and in

spite of.

Case Notes

June 20: Mr P C/O lower back pain. (first visit)

Today: July 20

Standard

Mr P first presented to me a month ago because he had experienced lower back pain.

Function

Reason

Participle Clauses

Mr P first presented to me a month ago complaining of lower back pain.

Case Notes

June 20: Mr P C/O lower back pain. (first visit)

Today: July 20

Standard

He first presented to me a month ago due to concerns about lower back pain.

Function

Reason

Participle Clauses

He first presented to me a month ago concerned about lower back pain.

Case Notes

Teacher (qualified last year) → voice becoming ↑ hoarse

Standard

Due to the fact that she is a recently qualified teacher, her professional voice use may have contributed to the dysphonia.

Function

Reason

Participle Clauses

Being a recently qualified teacher, her professional voice use may have contributed to the dysphonia.

Case Notes

Ms G

Ongoing stress → friction with colleagues.

Standard

Ms G's recent stress has a detrimental effect on her work as it has caused conflict with her colleagues

Function

Cause and effect

Participle Clauses

Ms G's recent stress has a detrimental effect on her work, causing conflict with her colleagues.

Case Notes

Ms G

Has had some counselling – achieved limited success

Standard

Although Ms G has received counselling, there has been limited success.

Function

Contrast

Participle Clauses

Despite receiving counselling, there has been limited success.

Despite counselling, Ms G has made little progress.

Case Notes

Now wishes to return to work

Plan: develop coping strategies

→ affirmations