

Subordinating Conjunctions

A subordinating conjunction joins two clauses, or ideas, in such a way as to make one grammatically dependent on the other. This creates a COMPLEX SENTENCE.

The idea, or clause, that a subordinating conjunction introduces is said to be “subordinate”, or dependent, because it cannot stand by itself as a complete sentence. This is why it's a COMPLEX SENTENCE.

Common Subordinating Conjunctions

After Although As As far as As if As long as As soon as As though
Because Before Considering (that) if Inasmuch as In order that Provided (that)
Since So long as So that Than Though Unless Until When
Whenever Where Whereas Wherever While

Ex. We raked leaves **because** so many had fallen. We raked leaves **before** we had lunch.
When more leaves fall, we will rake again.

Exercise A: Identifying Subordinating Conjunctions. Circle the subordinating conjunctions that appear in the sentences below.

1. Although they are found in many cultures around the world, murals have always been a particularly important art form in Mexico.
2. Some of the murals painted by the Mayan artists in ancient Mexico still survive, though many are in poor condition.
3. Before the Mexican painter Diego Rivera came on the scene, twentieth-century Mexican murals were relatively unknown.
4. Rivera designed extraordinary murals before he died in 1957.
5. Many of Rivera's murals depict scenes from Mexican history because Rivera believed that Mexicans are defined by their past.
6. After Rivera died, many Mexican American muralists took up his style and themes.
7. Some Mexican American artists in Los Angeles paint murals wherever they can find space.
8. The paint on public buildings so that their work can be enjoyed by many people.
9. So that the murals can be easily seen, the muralists use bright colors and bold, eye-catching designs.
10. As long as Hispanic culture continues to thrive in the United States, we will surely have many colorful and exciting murals to enjoy.

Exercise B: Completing Sentences with Subordinating Conjunctions. Write a subordinating conjunction to complete each of the sentences below. Be sure that your sentences make sense.

1. We can't name the earliest painters _____ they did not sign their work.
2. The art of painting began as early as the Paleolithic Age, _____ prehistoric hunters decorated walls of their caves.

3. _____ some ancient Greek painters are known, their works have not survived.
4. _____ images covered walls, gates, palaces, and temples, it seems likely that professional painters lived in Sumeria and ancient Egypt.
5. Decorations on Greek pottery were baked permanently into the surface _____ they could be preserved.
6. _____ they could not be baked, many paintings on wood or walls have been lost.
7. Roman painters used a heating process _____ their paintings might be preserved.
8. They discovered that paints weathered better _____ they were mixed with boiling wax, resin, and vegetable oils.
9. _____ wealthy Roman citizens admired art, fresco paintings covered the walls of their houses.
10. _____ Roman painters were very skillful, few of their works have endured.