

Adverb Clauses of Time

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Grammar Notes

INTRODUCTION TO ADVERB CLAUSES

Adverb clauses provide extra information to a sentence about *time*, *place*, *purpose*, etc. A clause always includes a subject (S) and a verb (V) that shows tense and agreement.

Adverb clauses are *dependent clauses*, meaning they cannot stand alone. Adverb clauses usually modify an *independent clause* (i.e., the main clause) of a sentence.

Adverb Clauses of Time

Adverb clauses of time give information about **when** certain actions take place. An adverb clause, together with the independent clause, shows whether two actions take place at the same time or different times in the past, present, or future.

A. Form

There are two ways to form a sentence with most adverbs (Adv) of time. An adverb clause can begin a sentence or it can follow the main clause. There is no difference in meaning between these two sentence patterns, and they are both common.

When an adverb clause begins a sentence, it is usually followed by a comma. There is no comma when the adverb clause follows the main clause.

#	Pattern	Example
1	<u>Adv + S + V</u> , <u>S + V</u> <i>dependent clause</i> <i>independent clause</i>	While I was eating dinner, I was watching TV.
2	<u>S + V</u> <u>Adv + S + V</u> <i>independent clause</i> <i>dependent clause</i>	I was watching TV while I was eating dinner.

Adverb Clauses of Time cont.

B. Time Adverbs

Adverb	Notes	Examples of Adverb Clauses
after	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used for actions that happen at different times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After I get home, I always check my email. I always check my email after I get home.
as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> more formal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the president was getting ready to address the nation, reporters crowded around the stage. Reporters crowded around the stage as the president was getting ready to address the nation.
as long as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> means "during a certain time period" or "provided that" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I will take care of you as long as I live.
as soon as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used for an action that immediately follows another action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As soon as Chen finishes his studies, he will move back to England. Chen will move back to England as soon as he finishes his studies.
before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used for actions that happen at different times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before Greta goes to bed, she has a cup of tea. Greta has a cup of tea before she goes to bed.
by the time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mostly used with the past perfect or future perfect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the time Alexei gets home tonight, Aunt Mila will have left. Aunt Mila will have left by the time Alexei gets home tonight.
every time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mostly used with the simple present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every time Hiroko calls me, we talk for an hour. Hiroko and I talk for an hour every time she calls me.



Adverb Clauses of Time cont.

B. Time Adverbs cont.

Adverb	Notes	Examples of Adverb Clauses
once	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> formal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once you complete your exam, you may leave the room. You may leave the room once you complete your exam.
since	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mostly used with the present perfect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Omar has lived on Main Street since he moved to Vancouver. Ever since he moved to Vancouver, Omar has lived on Main Street.
when	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> very common used for actions that happen at the same time or different times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When she lived in Montreal, she spoke French every day. She spoke French every day when she lived in Montreal.
whenever	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> means "at any time" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whenever I see my former boss, I get nervous. I get nervous whenever I see my former boss.
while	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> often used with the past progressive used for actions that happen at the same time or when a short action interrupts a long action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While I was studying for the exam, the phone rang. The phone rang while I was studying for the exam.
until	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> often used in the middle of a sentence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annalise usually works until she finishes all her tasks.

Exercise 1

ADVERBS

Fill in the blanks with the best adverb from the Adverb List.
Adverbs can be used more than once.

- Ex. I will tell you my secret as long as you promise not to tell anyone else.
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. My friend was studying _____ I was sleeping.
 5. _____ my sister got home last night, I had already gone to bed.
 6. _____ Hannah ate breakfast, she washed the dishes.
 7. _____ my sister woke up, my mother had left for work.
 8. Padma will stay with the baby _____ the babysitter arrives.
 9. _____ Kamala was sleeping last night, she had an incredible dream.
 10. _____ Tyrone's mother finishes cooking school, she will get a job in a restaurant.

Adverb List

- until
- by the time
- after
- as long as
- while

Exercise 2

CORRECT OR INCORRECT?

Are the following sentences correct? Put a check mark in one of the columns.

#	Sentence	Yes	No
Ex	Viktor will have graduated by the time he applies for a job.	✓	
1	I get excited whenever I see puppies.		
2	She was going to the beach every time I see her.		
3	I have loved you since I first saw your beautiful eyes.		
4	While I am studying next weekend, she will be sitting in a movie theater.		
5	Hyunseon will be return to his country after he graduates.		
6	John's brother has been in jail since he was 22 years old.		
7	By the time Ai got to the airport, the plane was left.		
8	While Aran driving to school, he was drinking coffee.		
9	After Maria takes biology and history, she took physics.		
10	Tanisha was still sleeping when I called her at 6:00 am yesterday.		

Exercise 3

MULTIPLE-CHOICE

Circle the correct answer to complete each sentence.

Ex. While I _____ tomorrow, I will think of you relaxing on the couch.

- a) will work
- b) am working
- c) worked
- d) will be working

1. _____ I saw Kristina for the first time, I thought she was your sister.

- a) If
- b) When
- c) While
- d) After

2. As soon as I get home, I _____ you.

- a) will call
- b) call
- c) am going call
- d) calling

3. Yesterday, after I _____ dinner, my sister came over.

- a) will finish
- b) finish
- c) had finished
- d) finishing

4. The movie _____ by the time I got to the theater.

- a) started
- b) had started
- c) starts
- d) was start

5. I _____ you since I _____ you.

- a) have hated / met
- b) hate / met
- c) have hated / have met
- d) will hate / meet

6. Yesterday, while I _____ dinner, the power _____ .

- a) ate / went out
- b) was eat / was go out
- c) was eating / was going out
- d) was eating / went out

7. Tomorrow, while I _____ dinner, I _____ the newspaper.

- a) eat / read
- b) am eating / will reading
- c) was eating / was reading
- d) am eating / will be reading

8. By the time I got to the game, it _____ .

- a) had started
- b) has started
- c) will have started
- d) starts

9. I _____ you when I arrive in Korea.

- a) would call
- b) will call
- c) called
- d) call

Exercise 4

YOKO'S EVENING

A. Chart

What did Yoko do last night? Read the chart.

Time	Activity
7:00	came home
7:05	checked her text messages
7:20	drank a glass of water
7:21	microwaved a frozen meal
7:30–7:40	ate dinner
7:30–7:40	read a book
8:00	her favorite TV program started
8:05	turned on the TV
9:00	fell asleep on the couch

Exercise 4 cont.

B. Sentences

Based on Yoko's activities, make five sentences using the patterns below.
Then write two of your own.

Ex. After S V, S V (7:05–7:20)

After Yoko checked her text messages, she drank a glass of water.

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 (7:00–7:05)

5. Before S V, S V (7:20–7:21)

6.

7.

Exercise 5

FIND THE ERROR

Find one error in each sentence and write the correct sentence on the line below.

Ex. Mohammed had finished his homework until his friend called.

Mohammed had finished his homework by the time his friend called.

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

2. Before he woke up yesterday, he had a cup of coffee.

3. When Jacques saw Marie for the first time, he was falling in love.

4. By the time Carlos arrived home, his mother left.

5. I will love you until I died.

6. I get sad, whenever I see Brett.

7. As I was falling asleep last night, I was seeing a bright light out the window.

8. I will work until I will finish the job.

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

10. Karina has worked at that company while she moved to Connecticut.

Exercise 6

PAIR WORK

With a partner, take turns describing Alex's schedule. Use the prompts to guide you.

A. Alex's Evening

Time	Activity
6:00–6:50	eats dinner
6:00–6:50	talks to his kids about the blizzard
6:55	his mother calls
7:00	brushes his teeth
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 theater

B. Speaking – Past

Imagine the activities in Part A happened last night. With your partner, take turns talking about Alex's activities. Use adverbs clauses.

Ex. Alex's mother called after he finished eating dinner last night.

C. Speaking – Future

Imagine the activities in Part A will happen tomorrow night. With your partner, take turns talking about Alex's activities. Use adverbs clauses.

Ex. Alex's mother will call after he finishes eating dinner tomorrow night.

Exercise 7

WRITING

What happened to you? Think of a time when you were involved in an accident or an unexpected situation and write a short story about it. It can be a true story or you can make one up. Use as many adverb clauses as you can.

Ex. Someone broke into my house last weekend. I didn't realize it until I got back from my vacation. I was having a great time skiing while someone was rifling through my personal belongings. By the time the police arrived, the culprit's fingerprints were no longer visible because it had been a few days...

Exercise 8

QUIZ




Circle the correct answer.

- By the time the movie started, _____ her homework.
 - she will complete
 - she complete
 - she is completing
 - she had completed
- After I _____ class tomorrow, I will go to that new restaurant.
 - finishes
 - will finish
 - have finished
 - finish
- She has not even looked at another man _____ she married Jim two weeks ago.
 - since
 - when
 - as long as
 - while
- Two days ago, their car broke down while they _____ to Philadelphia.
 - drove
 - was driving
 - were driving
 - drive
- By the time Oscar got to the airport, the plane _____.
 - had already left
 - left
 - will leave
 - has left
- I will call you _____ I get back from the party.
 - because
 - as soon as
 - while
 - as
- Every time I _____ you, you are wearing something purple.
 - will see
 - saw
 - see
 - have seen
- _____ I call that company, I get put on hold.
 - While
 - As
 - Since
 - Whenever
- The fire alarm rang _____ Karla was working in her office yesterday.
 - while
 - as soon as
 - until
 - since
- Tomorrow, while I _____, I will think of you watching TV on the couch.
 - will be working
 - am working
 - works
 - worked
- She will have left the office by the time you _____.
 - are returning
 - will return
 - return
 - returned
- I will love you _____ I die.
 - as soon as
 - after
 - until
 - before

Grammar Assessment

Student / Group: _____

Date	Level	Assessed By	Target	Skill
			Adverb Clauses	Grammar

Criteria	Achieved 	Achieved with Help 	Needs Improvement 
comprehends the meaning of various adverbs of time			
uses the appropriate verb tenses in adverb clauses			
uses adverb clauses correctly in speaking			
forms adverb clauses correctly in writing			

Notes




Self-Assessment

ADVERB CLAUSES OF TIME

Add check marks (✓) to show what you've learned in this lesson.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Can I...	Yes (very well) 	Yes (with help) 	Not yet 
use a variety of adverbs of time in dependent clauses?			
use the correct verb tense in adverb clauses of time?			
use adverb clauses correctly when speaking?			
write and punctuate adverb clauses correctly?			

My Notes

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, students learn how to use adverb clauses of time. They learn the differences in meaning of various adverbs of time and practice using different verb tenses.

LEVEL: High Int

TIME: 2–3 hours

TAGS: adverb clauses, time clauses, after, when, before, while, as, until, since, whenever, as long as, by the time, dependent clauses, adverbs of time, commas, comma placement, sentence position, assessment, complex sentences, grammar, grammar practice exercises

Grammar Notes

Review the grammar notes with your students. Have them come up with more examples of adverb clauses using the different time adverbs in the chart on pages 3 and 4. Can they think of examples for each time adverb in the present, past, and future? What tenses are possible with each?

For a review of common tenses used with adverb clauses of time, see our Grammar Practice Worksheets section. Here are some less familiar tenses that you might wish to review with your students before or after this lesson:

Past Progressive

<https://www.esllibrary.com/courses/88/lessons/1595>

Future Progressive

<https://www.esllibrary.com/courses/88/lessons/2055>

Present Perfect

<https://www.esllibrary.com/courses/88/lessons/1597>

Past Perfect

<https://www.esllibrary.com/courses/88/lessons/1599>

Future Perfect

<https://www.esllibrary.com/courses/88/lessons/1614>

Exercise 1

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. as long as | 6. After |
| 2. until | 7. By the time |
| 3. after | 8. until |
| 4. while | 9. While |
| 5. By the time | 10. After |

Exercise 2

Review as a class. Ask your students to tell you how to fix any incorrect answers. Answers may vary. See sample corrections below.

1. Yes
2. No (She is going to the beach every time I see her./She was going to the beach every time I saw her.)
3. Yes
4. Yes
5. No (Hyunseon will return/will be returning to his country after he graduates.)
6. Yes
7. No (By the time Ai got to the airport, the plane had left.)
8. No (While Aran was driving to school, he was drinking coffee.)
9. No (After Maria takes biology and history, she is taking/is going to take/will take/will be taking physics.)
10. Yes

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Exercise 3

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. b | 3. c | 5. a | 7. d | 9. b |
| 2. a | 4. b | 6. d | 8. a | |

Exercise 4

B. SENTENCES

Answers may vary.

- At precisely 7:32 last night, Yoko was eating dinner.
- While Yoko was eating dinner, she was reading a book.
- By the time Yoko turned on the TV, her favorite program had started.
- As soon as Yoko came home, she checked her text messages.
- Before Yoko microwaved a frozen meal, she drank a glass of water.
- Answers will vary.
- Answers will vary.

Exercise 5

Answers may vary.

- While Nestor was walking to school, he **ran** into his teacher.
- After** he woke up yesterday, he had a cup of coffee.
- When Jacques saw Marie for the first time, he **fell** in love.
- By the time Carlos arrived home, his mother **had left**.
- I love you until I **die**.
- I get sad whenever I see Brett. [no comma]
- As I was falling asleep last night, I **saw** a bright light out the window.
- I will work until I **finish** the job.
- By the time Lee **turned** on the TV, the program had ended.
- Karina has worked at that company **since** she moved to Connecticut.

Exercise 6

Answers will vary. Monitor your students for correct adverb clause formation. You may choose to follow up by having students write past and future sentences using adverb clauses.

Exercise 7

Answers will vary. Monitor your students for correct adverb clause formation.

Exercise 8

- | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. d | 3. a | 5. a | 7. c | 9. a | 11. c |
| 2. d | 4. c | 6. b | 8. d | 10. b | 12. c |

Grammar Assessment

Use this tool for assessment purposes. Find Assessment Tools that you can personalize in our Resources section: https://esllibrary.com/resource_categories/104/resources/2352

Self-Assessment

Have your students fill out this form.

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the words *Theater* and *Favorite*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Theatre* and *Favourite*. Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spellings.