



Five Useful Ways to Join Ideas in a Sentence



Coordination

1

Independent clause { , and
 , but
 , for
 , nor
 , or
 , so
 , yet } independent clause

2

Independent clause { •
 ; } independent clause

3

Independent clause { ; consequently,
 ; furthermore,
 ; however,
 ; in addition,
 ; indeed,
 ; in fact,
 ; moreover,
 ; nevertheless,
 ; then,
 ; therefore, } independent clause

Subordination

4

Independent clause { after
 although
 as (as if)
 because
 before
 if
 since
 unless
 until
 when(ever)
 whereas
 while } dependent clause

5

After
Although
As (as if)
Because
Before
If
Since
Unless
Until
When(ever)
Whereas
While } dependent clause, independent clause

One of the most frequently asked questions about grammar is about choosing between the various forms of the pronoun **who** (i.e., who, whose, whom, whoever, whomever).

The number (singular or plural) of the pronoun (and its accompanying verbs) is determined by what the pronoun refers to; it can refer to a singular person or a group of people:

- The person **who** hit my car should have to pay to fix the damages.
- The people **who** have been standing in line the longest should get in first.

It might be useful to compare the forms of **who** to the forms of the pronouns **he** and **they**. Their forms are similar:

| | Singular | Plural |
|------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Subject Form | he who | they who |
| Possessive Form | his whose | their whose |
| Object Form | him whom | them whom |

To choose correctly among the forms of **who**, re-phrase the sentence so you choose between **he** and **him**. If you want **him**, write **whom**; if you want **he**, write **who**.

- **Who** do you think is responsible?
Do you think **he** is responsible?
- **Whom** shall we ask to the party?
Shall we ask **him** to the party?
- Give the box to **whomever** you please.
Give the box to **him**.
- Give the box to **whoever** seems to want it most.
He seems to want it most.*

* And then the clause “whoever seems to want it most” is the object of the preposition “to”.

The number of people who use **whom** and **who** wrongly is appalling. The problem is a difficult one and it is complicated by the importance of tone, or taste. Take the common expression, “*Whom are you, anyways?*” That is of course, strictly speaking, correct – and yet how formal, how stilted! The usage to be preferred in ordinary speech and writing is, “*Who are you, anyways?*” **Whom** should be used in the nominative case only when a note of dignity or austerity is desired. For example, if a writer is dealing with a meeting of, say, the British Cabinet, it would be better to have the Prime Minister greet a new arrival, such as an under-secretary, with a “*Whom are you, anyways?*” rather than a “*Who are you, anyways?*” – always granted that the Prime Minister is sincerely unaware of the man’s identity. To address a person one knows by a “*Whom are you?*” is a mark either of incredible lapse of memory or inexcusable arrogance. “*How are you?*” is a much kindlier salutation.