

Sentence Fluency
Pattern #8

Pattern #8 Dependent Clauses in a Pair or in a Series
(at the beginning or the end of the sentence)

If . . . , if . . . , if . . . , then S V

When . . . , when . . . , when . . . , S V

S V that . . . , that . . . , that

Explanation – Preceding patterns have shown series with single words or phrases. This pattern shows a series with dependent clauses. **All of the clauses in the series must be:**

- **Dependent**
- **Parallel in structure**
- **Express conditions or situations dependent upon the idea in the main clause**

The series may come at the beginning or at the end of the sentence. You will normally have two or three clauses here; rarely will four or five sound graceful and smooth. Try not to struggle for style. Relax. Be natural.

When to use this pattern – This pattern is unique. Save it for special places, special functions. It is particularly helpful

- At the end of a single paragraph to summarize major points
- In structuring a thesis statement having three or more parts
- In the introductory or conclusion paragraph to bring together the main points of a composition in a single sentence.

Examples

Because it may seem difficult at first, because it may sound awkward or forced, because it often creates lengthy sentences where the thought “gets lost,” this pattern seems forbidding to some writers, but it isn’t all that hard; try it.

When he smelled the pungent odor of pine, when he heard the chatter of jays interrupting the silence, when he saw the startled doe, the hunter knew he had reached the center of the forest.

Since he had little imagination and since he displayed even less talent, he wasn’t hired for the job.