Sentence Structure

The Simple Sentence
For a sentence, there must be a nominal subject followed by a verbal predicate. The exact form of the predicate’s verb depends on the subject.
Examples: Jane is a teacher. The Smiths are famous.

A sentence:
- Begins with a capital letter.
- Can’t start with a subordinating conjunction. This is a fragment.
  - Example: If everyone comes to the dance. (Well???- this needs a complete sentence)
- Ends with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point.

The Compound Sentence
Two independent clauses combine with a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet and so) and a comma:
Example: He wants to pass his classes, so he needs to study.

Two sentences can also be separated by a semicolon, if the second clause follows from the first.
Example: Passing is not impossible; it's just hard work.

The Complex Sentence
This uses a subordinating conjunction (because, if, when, etc.) in one of two ways;
- When the dependent clause follows, there is no need to punctuate.
  - Example: He needs to study because he wants to pass his classes.
  - Exception: If the clause is not necessary (added), then use a comma.
  - Example: He needs to study, even if he is smart.
- When the dependent clause goes first, a comma shows where this clause ends.
  - Because he wants to pass his classes, he needs to study.