

# A SENTENCE CHECKLIST

1. A sentence must contain at least one subject-verb unit:

Willie Stargell whacked a home run.

To find the subject-verb unit, locate the verb by changing the sentence time:

Willie Stargell *whacked* a home run.

Tomorrow, Willie Stargell *will whack* a home run.

Verbs: whacked, will whack

Then connect the subject to the verb by asking:

Who whacked?

*S*            *v*  
Stargell whacked

2. The verb cannot be an *-ing* word alone. Not a sentence:

the crowd screaming

Connect the *-ing* word to a time word:

The crowd was screaming.

Or connect the phrase containing the *-ing* word to a sentence with a time word:

Screaming, the crowd watched the home run.

3. A subject-verb unit introduced by a subordinator (when, because, if, since, etc.) is not a sentence, but a dependent clause:

*dependent clause*                      *independent clause*  
When Stargell whacked a home run, the crowd went wild.

4. Who, which, whose, or whom cannot be the subject of a sentence unless the sentence is a question. A subject-verb unit introduced by these words is not a sentence, but a dependent clause. Not a sentence:

which made the crowd go wild

Connect the who or which clause to its related independent clause:

Willie Stargell whacked a home run, which made the crowd go wild.