

CONJUNCTIONS AND TRANSITIONS

Conjunctions and transitions are both important to make writing easier to read. These words and phrases show the relationship between sentences and parts of sentences.

Conjunctions connect two clauses to add, compare, or contrast information; show sequence; give an example; or show another relationship. Transitions do the same, but join sentences and paragraphs, rather than clauses within a sentence.

There are four types of conjunctions: coordinating, subordinating, correlative, and adverbial/ linking.

Coordinating conjunctions join nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, phrases, and clauses. Coordinating conjunctions are usually remembered as FANBOYS:

For means “because” and shows a logical result: The thieves were caught , for they did not wear gloves.

And adds information: Lions live in prides, and the females hunt together.

Nor joins two negative points: Coal is not clean, nor is it renewable.

But shows a contrast: Nurses cannot perform surgery, but they can give shots.

Or shows a choice: Would you like to go bowling, or would you rather stay home?

Yet shows a contrast: We ate an hour ago, yet I am hungry.

So means “therefore” and shows a logical result: The car is dirty, so it needs to be washed.

Note: *For* and *so* both show a logical result or consequence, but are used differently. *For* is used before showing the reason for the result, but *so* is used to indicate the result, or possible result, itself.

Subordinating conjunctions create subordinate clauses which cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. Like other conjunctions, these show various relationships between the two clauses, including:

Comparison: as, as if, just as

Condition: as long as, if, provided that, so long as, whereas, while

Contrast: although, even if, even though, though, whereas

Cause and Effect: as if, because, in order that, now that, so, whether

Sequence/ Time: after, as, as long as, as soon as, before, since, until, when



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Correlative conjunctions are pairs that connect two equal grammatical items. For example, it joins two nouns or two independent clauses. These are:

Both _____ **and** _____ adds information: Marilyn Monroe was *both* beautiful *and* talented.

Either _____ **or** _____ shows a choice: *Either* you can cook dinner, *or* we can order pizza.

Neither _____ **nor** _____ joins two negative points: Learning a language is *neither* quick *nor* easy.

Not _____ **but** _____ shows a contrast: My boyfriend is *not* handsome or rich, *but* he is funny and smart.

Not only _____ **but also** _____ adds information: If you want to go to Harvard, you must *not only* study hard, *but also* meet other requirements.

Whether _____ **or** _____ shows a condition: *Whether* you like him *or* not, Donald Trump is the President of the United States.

Adverbial or Linking conjunctions are the same as transitions. If two sentences or paragraphs are linked, they are called transitions; otherwise, they are called conjunctions. There are dozens of words and phrases; here are some common ones:

Addition: additionally, also, in addition, furthermore, likewise, moreover, similarly

Contrast: however, in contrast, in fact, on the contrary, on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, still, yet

Example: after all, as an illustration, for example, for instance, in fact, indeed, namely, specifically, to illustrate

Emphasis: above all, certainly, in fact, indeed

Result: as a result, consequently, hence, then, therefore, thus

Sequence/ Time: afterward, earlier, meanwhile, then

Summary: finally, in conclusion, in a word, in other words, therefore, thus, to summarize

Practice: Take a piece of writing you have already created and rewrite it, adding conjunctions and transitions to make it easier for your readers to understand.

