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Conjunctions *join* clauses or sentences and coordinate words in the same clause.

Contrast conjunctions connect *ideas* and *clauses* that *contrast*. The following words and phrases are contrast conjunctions: ***but, although, though, even though, even if, while, in spite of, while, whilst, whereas***.

But

'But' is one of the most common contrast conjunctions. We use 'but' to connect ideas that *contrast* or *oppose each other*.

When we use 'but' to join two *independent/main* clauses (sentences), we must use a *comma* before 'but'. If there aren't two independent clauses on either side of 'but', we don't need a comma.

- *I want to go for a walk, **but** it's raining outside.*
- *That lady is nice **but** stern.*

Although/though/even though

We use 'although', 'though' and 'even though' to join the main clause to a subordinate clause that contains a *surprise* or *unexpected results*.

They do not connect two independent (main) clauses. The clause that contains 'although', 'though', or 'even though' is a *subordinate* clause and cannot stand alone as a full sentence. When the subordinate clause comes *first*, we use a *comma* after it.

- **Although** *I hate camping, I am going hiking and camping this weekend.*
- **Though** *she waited for almost an hour, her friend never showed up.*
- **Even though** *I got ready to go, we decided to just stay at home.*

When the subordinate clause comes *after* the main clause, we *do not need a comma*.

- *I am going hiking and camping this weekend **although** I hate camping.*
- *Her friend never showed up **though** she waited for almost an hour.*
- *We decided to just stay at home **even though** I got ready to go.*

Both '*although*' and '*though*' have the same meaning, however, '*although*' is more *formal* and more common in writing. We can use '*even + though*' to add emphasis to '*though*'.

Even if

'*Even if*' is similar to '*even though*' and '*although*'/'*though*', and it is used in the same way. '*Even if*' means "*whether or not*."

Again, the clause with '*even if*' is a subordinate clause, so we must use a *comma* if the subordinate clause comes *before the main clause*.

- ***Even if** you run fast, you'll still be late for school.*
- *I'll be happy **even if** I'm not chosen.*

In spite of

We use '*in spite of*' to show *unexpected* results. The clause containing '*in spite of*' is a subordinate clause.

Just like with the previous conjunctions, when the subordinate clause comes first, we use a *comma* after it. '*In spite of*' is followed by either a *gerund* ('-ing' form of the verb) or a *noun phrase*.

- ***In spite of** having a bad teacher, the students all did well on their test.*
- *The baby slept well **in spite of** all the noise.*
- *I enjoyed the party **in spite of** having a headache.*

While/whilst/whereas

We use '*while*', '*whilst*', and '*whereas*' to join *contrasting ideas*. '*While*' and '*whilst*' mean the same thing though '*while*' is more common and '*whilst*' is more formal and more archaic English. They both mean '*at/during the same time that something else is happening*,' or '*in*

contrast with.'

- **While/Whilst** *I prefer to eat at the table, my husband prefers to eat in front of the television.* (contrast)
- *You get some onions **while/whilst** I get the meat.* (at the same time)

You can see that we use a comma when 'while'/'whilst' joins contrasting ideas regardless of whether the subordinate clause comes first or second. However, we do *not* use a comma when 'while'/'whilst' is used to mean "during the same time."

We cannot use 'whereas' to mean 'at the same time.' We only use 'whereas' to *join contrasting ideas*. We use a comma with 'whereas' in the same way that we do for 'although'/'though' and other subordinating clauses.

- **Whereas** *I like to get up early and go for a run, my partner likes to sleep in and go for a run in the evening.*
- *John spends his money right away **whereas** Joan saves hers for a rainy day.*

Note: Some suggest that a comma should be used before 'although', 'though', 'whereas', (and 'while' when it is used as an adverb of concession and not to mean 'at the same time as'), when the subordinate clause follows the main clause.

- John spends his money right away, whereas Joan saves hers for a rainy day.

In this video from Learn English on Skype, you'll find the explanation and many examples of how to use conjunctions of contrast:

Read more on this topic:

[Adverb Clauses of Contrast and Purpose](#)

[Coordinating Conjunctions](#)

[Correlative Conjunctions](#)