

Types of Conjunctions

What's a Conjunction?

A conjunction is a part of speech that links words, phrases and clauses. They are the bridges that connect ideas. Using different types of conjunctions help the writer to smooth out choppy writing, bring together ideas, and build complex sentences. Conjunctions fall into one four categories **based on how they're used**.

❖ **Coordinating conjunction**

Example: *He can't get a ride, **so** he has to stay home.*

❖ **Correlative conjunction**

Example: *I don't know **whether** he's getting a ride **or** staying home.*

❖ **Subordinating conjunction**

Example: ***Because** he can't get a ride, he has to stay home.*

❖ **Conjunctive adverb**

Example: *He can't get a ride; **therefore**, he has to stay home.*

1. Coordinating Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions connect grammatically equal elements. They are sometimes called the “**Fan Boys**” conjunctions: **For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So**.

Conjunction	Function	Example
For	Connects a reason to a result	I am a little hungry, for I didn't eat breakfast this morning.
And	Connects equal similar ideas	John likes to fish and hunt.
Nor	Connects equal negative ideas	She doesn't eat meat, nor does she drink milk.
But	Connects equal different ideas	I like to eat fish but not to catch them.
Or	Connects equal choices	Do you prefer coffee or tea?
Yet	Connects equal contrasting ideas	It is sunny yet cold.
So	Connects a result to a reason	I did not eat breakfast this morning, so I am a little hungry.

2. Paired (correlative) Conjunctions

Correlative conjunctions are always in pairs. Like coordinating conjunctions, they connect grammatically equal elements.

Connection Pairs	Examples
Both ... and	Both San Francisco and Sydney have beautiful harbours.
Not only ... but also	Japanese food is not only delicious to eat but also beautiful to look at.

Either ... or	Bring either a raincoat or an umbrella when you visit Settle.
Neither ... nor	My grandfather could neither read nor write, but he was a very wise person.
Whether ... or	The newlyweds could not decide whether to live with her parents or to rent an apartment.

3. Subordinating Words

Subordinating words are the first words in dependent clauses. They link dependent clauses (incomplete thoughts) to independent clauses (complete thoughts).

- *Unless we give him a ride, he won't be able to come.*
- *Here's some cash **in case** your credit card doesn't work.*

- Use a comma if the subordinating conjunction and dependent clause are at the beginning of a sentence. Otherwise, the comma isn't required.

- *As soon as she's finished her phone call, we'll leave for the restaurant.*
- *We'll leave for the restaurant **as soon** as she's finished her phone call.*

Common subordinating words include the following:

➤ Subordinating Conjunctions for Adverb Clauses:

- **Time (when):** After, as, just as, as long as, as soon as, before, since, until, when, whenever, while.
- **Place:** where, wherever, anywhere, everywhere.
- **Manner:** as, just as, as if, as though.
- **Distance (How far? How near? How close?):** as +adverb +as

E.g. The child sat **as close as** she could to her mother.

- **Frequency (How often?):** as often as

E.g. I call my parents **as often as** I can.

- **Reason (why?):** as, because, since.
- **Purpose (For what purpose?):** so that, in order that
- **Result (with what result):** so+ adjective+ that, so+ adverb+ that, such a/ an+ noun+ that, so much/ many/ little/ few+ noun +that
- **Condition (under what condition?):** if, unless.
- **Partial contrast:** although, even though, though.
- **Contrast (Direct opposites):** while, whereas.

➤ Subordinating Words for Adjective Clauses

- **To refer to people:** who, whom, that (informal)
- **To refer to animals and things:** which, that
- **To refer to a time or a place:** when, where.

➤ Subordinating Words for Noun Clauses

- **That clauses:** that
- **If/ whether clauses:** whether, whether or not, whether ...or not, if, if ... not
- **Question clauses:** who, whoever, whom, which, what, where, when, why, how, how much, how many, how long, how often, etc.

4. Conjunctive Adverbs

Conjunctive adverbs can appear at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of one independent clause, but we often use them to connect two independent clauses.

- Remember to put a semicolon before and a comma after the conjunctive adverb if an independent clause follows.

- **To add a similar idea:** also, besides, furthermore, in addition, moreover
- **To add an unexpected or surprising continuation:** however, nevertheless, nonetheless, still
- **To add a complete contrast:** in contrast, on the other hand.
- **To add a result:** as a result, consequently, therefore, thus
- **To list ideas in order of time:** meanwhile, afterward, then, subsequently.
- **To give an example:** for example, for instance
- **To show similarities:** similarly, likewise
- **To indicate “the first statement is not true; the second statement is true”:** instead, on the contrary, rather, instead (meaning as a substitute).
- **To give another possibility:** alternatively, on the other hand, otherwise (meaning “if not”)
- **To add an explanation:** in other words, that is
- **To make a stronger statement:** indeed, in fact.