

Conjunctions are the words that link other words, phrases, sentences or clauses together. Without them, we need to express more complex ideas in many short and simple sentences:

I like cooking. I like eating. I don't like washing the dishes afterwards. Kate is exhausted. She insists on dancing until dawn.

After using the correct conjunctions:

I like cooking and eating, **but** I don't like washing dishes afterwards. Kate is exhausted, **yet** she insists on dancing until dawn.

Avoiding multiple cut sentences, conjunctions allow you to create complex and elegant sentences. **BUT** there's one thing you should be aware of: the phrases need to have the same structure in order to connect them!

INCORRECT: I cook quickly **and** efficient.


CORRECT: I cook quickly **and** efficiently.

There are three kinds of conjunctions: coordinating, paired or correlative and subordinating.

WHAT DO CONJUNCTIONS LOOK LIKE

A. single word

for example: and, but, because, although



B. compound (often ending with as or that)

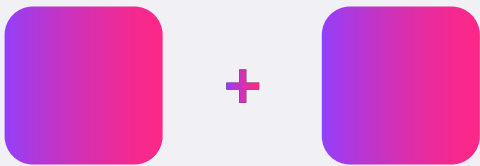
for example: provided that, as long as, in order that

C. correlative (surrounding an adverb or adjective)

for example: so...that

COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

They connect words or phrases that are grammatically equal or similar. They show that the elements the conjunction joins are similar in importance and structure.



There are seven main coordinating conjunctions in English, which form the acronym FANBOYS: **f**or, **a**nd, **n**or, **b**ut, **o**r, **y**et, **s**o. They always come **between** the words or clauses that they join.

F: **for**: The employees were frustrated, **for** the company had cut funding for all their new projects.*

When to use it: You're providing a reason for something (similar to the word "because," which we'll cover later in this class)

.A: **and**: I will write a review, a case study, **and** a final paper. **

When to use it: "And" joins two ideas, things or sentences together.

N: **nor**: The students didn't complete their homework, **nor** did they pass the test.

When to use it: When you have a negative statement, “nor” adds another negative alternative.

B: **but**: The study is several years old **but** still valuable to this study.

When to use it: This conjunction connects two ideas, similar to how you might use the word “and.” However, while “and” connects two alike ideas/things, “but” connects contrasting ideas/things.

O: **or**: At the end of the class, kids could choose to eat a burger **or** have a milkshake.

When to use it: “Or” presents an alternative to an option.

Y: **yet**: The patient complained of chronic pain, **yet** she refused treatment.

When to use it: When you present a statement, “yet” presents an idea that contrasts the first statement logically.

S: **so**: I have only been an architect for a year, **so** I have little experience with old buildings.

When to use it: This conjunction gives a reason for something.

* “for” is rarely used as a conjunction in modern English.

** when the conjunctions “and” and “or” connect three or more words or phrases, use a serial comma to separate items in the series. It means that you need to separate each item as a list, including right before the word “and”.

When it joins sentences that could perfectly work individually, it's correct to place a comma before the conjunction.

I want to work as an interpreter in the future, **so** I am studying French at university.

However, if the independent clauses are short and well-balanced, a comma is not really essential:

She is kind so she helps people.

"Therefore" and "however" are transitional words, but they can also function as conjunctions:

"I like that sweater; **however**, it only comes in one color."

"I got there really early; **therefore** I was first in line."

PAIRED/CORRELATIVE CONJUNCTIONS

They consist of two words or phrases that help make a point or establish alternatives. Although paired conjunctions can be helpful in structuring a sentence, they can also make sentences longer than necessary, so use these conjunctions sparingly.

both...and

The project will require significant investments of **both** time **and** money. **Both** the students **and** the teachers were satisfied with the pilot program.

Note: When two subjects are connected by "both...and," use a plural verb (such as "are" or "were").

not only...but also

Students who did not complete the assignment received **not only** a poor grade **but also** a warning from the teacher.

Not only did the student include full sentences from the source without using quotation marks, **but he also** failed to properly cite paraphrased material.

either...or

Either the students were unprepared **or** the assessment was poorly written.

Participants in the survey could **either** choose from a list of possible answers **or** write in their own responses.

neither...nor

Students who did not complete the project received **neither** praise **nor** rewards.

The **staff** neither followed the new policy **nor** asked for clarification.

Whether/or

When to use them: I briefly mentioned this pairing when discussing “whether” previously. Use “whether/or” to talk about two options.

Example sentences:

“Have you decided whether you want to wear the red shirt or the blue shirt?”

“Whether we leave at TRIAL ONLY ZETAFONTS.COM TRIAL ONLY ZETAFONTS.COM TRIAL ONLY ZETAFONTS.COM or TRIAL ONLY ZETAFONTS.COM TRIAL ONLY ZETAFONTS.COM TRIAL ONLY ZETAFONTS.COM, we’re going to get stuck in traffic.”

“You’re going to eat your vegetables, whether you like it or not.”

(Note: “Whether you like it or not” is a common phrase for expressing that someone doesn’t have a choice in the matter. It’s probably most common for parents to say to children.)

If/then

When to use them: The words “if” and “then” separate two clauses. Use the pair to talk about something that will happen as a result of something else happening.

Example sentences:

“If Bob graduates from college, then he can apply for the job opening at Google.”

“If I order a medium pizza instead of a small, then I’ll have leftovers to eat tomorrow.”

“Joe is allergic to peanut butter. If he accidentally eats some, then his tongue will swell up.”