Coordination, Correlation, and Subordination

Conjunctions are words that connect words, phrases, or clauses, but the different types of conjunctions establish these connections based on specific relationships between the words, phrases and clauses.

### Coordinating Conjunctions

This type of conjunction connects words, phrases, and clauses of equal grammatical rank. The seven coordinating conjunctions can be easily remembered using the acronym F.A.N.B.O.Y.S.

- **For** expresses causal relationships – one element causes another.
  - Ex. The pianist practiced every day, for she wanted to perform well at her recital.

- **And** joins elements to show what they have in common.
  - Ex. She played pieces by Bach, Beethoven, and Rachmaninoff.

- **Nor** is an alternative way of expressing a second action as negative.
  - Ex. She did not stop to eat for two whole days, nor did she sleep.

- **But** emphasizes the difference between the two elements it joins.
  - Ex. She was so tired, but she kept practicing.

- **Or** indicates an alternative.
  - Ex. She knew that she must perform well at the recital, or she would not be accepted into the Academy of Arts.

- **Yet** emphasizes the difference between the elements it joins. However, unlike “but” it further suggests that the second element is something not ordinarily expected.
  - Ex. She usually played well, yet her fatigue made her sloppy.

- **So** suggests a purpose – the second element is needed because of the first.
  - Ex. She finally couldn’t keep her eyes open, so she took a nap.
**Correlative Conjunctions**

This type of conjunction adds further emphasis to the relationships set up by coordinating conjunctions. The five correlatives (*both...and; either...or; neither...nor; not only...but also; whether...or*) must join elements alike in structure or the effect of the correlative is lost.

**Ex.** She was not only tired, but the pianist was also hungry.

**Ex.** Not only was she tired, but the pianist was also hungry.

**Ex.** She knew she had to *either* sleep *or* eat something to keep her energy up.

**Ex.** But, ultimately, she *neither* slept *nor* ate anything for two days.

**Note:** The correlative *neither...nor* negates the action of a sentence and so should be used only with positive verbs.

**Ex.** The pianist could not play neither Mozart nor Bizet. = Double Negative

**Corrected Ex.** The pianist could play neither Mozart nor Bizet.

**Corrected Ex. 2** The pianist could not play either Mozart or Bizet.

It should also be noted that *either* cannot go with *nor* and *neither* cannot go with *or*.

**Conjunctive Adverbs**

These conjunctions are different from other joining words in that they usually begin sentences and function as transitions (see handout entitled *Transition Signals*). For this reason, they are often preceded by periods or semicolons and followed by commas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conjunctive Adverb</th>
<th>Relationship Indicated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>also, besides, furthermore, likewise, moreover</td>
<td>addition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>likewise, similarly</td>
<td>comparison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conversely, however, otherwise, nevertheless, still</td>
<td>contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accordingly, consequently, hence, subsequently, therefore, thus</td>
<td>result</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Conjunctive Adverbs can be embedded within sentences provided they come between subjects and accompanying verbs, and are surrounded by commas on both sides.

**Ex.** The pianist, nevertheless, continued to practice.
Subordinating Conjunctions

Many of the relationships indicated by coordinating conjunctions can also be indicated by subordinating conjunctions. Importantly, however, subordinating conjunctions make connections based on unequal grammatical rank, and so they must be handled differently in writing.

Subordinating conjunctions connect a dependent (subordinate) clause to an independent (main) clause to create a complex sentence. Unfortunately, unlike coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions do not have a helpful acronym to help us remember them. Some of the more common subordinating conjunctions are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subordinating Conjunction</th>
<th>Relationship Indicated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>because, in that, since</td>
<td>causal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>although, even though, except, though, while</td>
<td>concession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if, once, unless, whether</td>
<td>conditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as, as if, as though</td>
<td>manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whence, where, wherever</td>
<td>place or direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in order that, so, so that, that</td>
<td>purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after, as long as, as soon as, before, since, when</td>
<td>time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No commas are necessary before a subordinating conjunction when a dependent clause finishes a sentence.

Ex. The pianist played poorly at her recital because she did not get enough sleep.

By comparison, when a dependent clause begins a sentence, a comma should precede the beginning of the independent clause.

Ex. Because she did not get enough sleep, the pianist played poorly at her recital.

Dependent Clause Independent Clause

Complex Sentence

Note: Dependent clauses not attached to independent clauses are called sentence fragments and should be avoided as an error in writing.

Ex. Although the pianist had a nap.

Corrected Ex. Although the pianist had a nap, she was still tired.