Transitions and other signal words and phrases show connections between (or within) sentences. Using these words appropriately enhances the logic and readability of your writing and helps your reader to navigate smoothly from one idea to the next.

I made it to class on time. I found I had left my homework in my dorm room.

I made it to class on time, **but I** found I’d left my homework in my dorm room.

(**Coordinating conjunction** that indicates contrast/concession)

Some of my plants died. I had overwatered them.

Some of my plants died **because** I had overwatered them.

(**Subordinating conjunction** that indicates cause)

We made our reservations. We booked our flight.

**First,** we made our reservations. **Next,** we booked our flight.

(**Transitional words** that signal time sequence)

Choose the right signal word or phrase for the relationship you mean to signal to your reader.

**Illustration, clarification**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| for examplefor instancein particularparticularly | such asthat is in other words | specificallynamely to illustrate |

**Addition**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| andalsonot only . . . but alsoboth . . . and . . . as well as | furthermorefurthermoreoveradditionallyagain | in additionbesides too |

**Comparison, similarity**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| andboth . . . and . . . as | alsosimilarly likewise | in the same way |

**Contrast, conflict, concession, exception**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| butyet or, noreither . . . orneither . . . nor althoughthougheven though | while whereas howeverconverselyin contrastotherwiseon the contraryon the other hand  | in spite ofdespite neverthelessregardlessstill even sodifferent from/thanratherinstead  |

**Cause, reason, purpose**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| soso that for because | for this reasondue to sincefor the purpose of  | if . . . thenin order to |

**Consequence, effect, result**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| thereforeas a resultas a consequence | because consequentlythus | since hence |

**Condition**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| in order thatin the event that provided that | if unless | in caseas long as |

**Emphasis, importance, conclusion**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| indeedin factin shortin conclusionin summary especially | importantlyabove allcertainly important to noteclearly  | altogetherall in all principallyof coursefinally |

**Time or sequence**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| first, second, thirdfirst, next, lastpreviously simultaneouslyimmediatelyfinally subsequently meanwhile | whenwhilesincebefore, during, afterafterwardthereafter earlier, now, later | at lastas as soon asas long as until thenfollowing |

**Space or location (**There are many more location prepositions than the ones listed here**.)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| wherewhereverbetween on, in, into, uponby  | beside nearhere, thereaway  | over, under in front ofnext toclose to  |

**OFFICE OF WRITING AND LANGUAGE SERVICES, LOYOLA UNIVERSITY, ML 241, 865-2990**