

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 example  for instance  in particular  particularly | such as  that is  in other words | specifically  namely  to illustrate |

**Addition**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| and  also  not only . . . but also  both . . . and . . .  as well as | furthermore  further  moreover  additionally  again | in addition  besides  too |

**Comparison, similarity**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| and  both . . . and . . .  as | also  similarly  likewise | in the same way |

**Contrast, conflict, concession, exception**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| but  yet  or, nor  either . . . or  neither . . . nor  although  though  even though | while  whereas  however  conversely  in contrast  otherwise  on the contrary  on the other hand | in spite of  despite  nevertheless  regardless  still  even so  different from/than  rather  instead |

**Cause, reason, purpose**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| so  so that  for  because | for this reason  due to  since  for the purpose of | if . . . then  in order to |

**Consequence, effect, result**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| therefore  as a result  as a consequence | because  consequently  thus | since  hence |

**Condition**

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

**Emphasis, importance, conclusion**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| indeed  in fact  in short  in conclusion  in summary  especially | importantly  above all  certainly  important to note  clearly | altogether  all in all  principally  of course  finally |

**Time or sequence**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| first, second, third  first, next, last  previously  simultaneously  immediately  finally  subsequently  meanwhile | when  while  since  before, during, after  afterward  thereafter  earlier, now, later | at last  as  as soon as  as long as  until  then  following |

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| where  wherever  between  on, in, into, upon  by | beside  near  here, there  away | over, under  in front of  next to  close to |

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