## Some Common English Transition Words and Phrases

### Adding Information
- and
- not only . . . but also
- also
- moreover (more formal)
- furthermore (more formal)
- in addition (more formal)

### Examples
- We have seen the movie twice, **and** now we want to see it again.
- **Not only** did my brother break his leg, **but** he also bruised his rib.
- My friend speaks Korean and English. She **also** speaks Chinese.
- Cheating is dishonest. **Moreover,** it hinders students from learning.
- Students should be on time. **Furthermore,** they must be prepared.
- You must complete this essay by 5 p.m. **In addition,** you must do the exercises on page 47.

### Giving Examples
- for example
- for instance
- specifically
- in particular
- The first (second, another, etc.)
- example/reason is . . .

### Examples
- I have been to many countries. **For example,** I have been to Russia, Canada, Mexico, and Spain.
- He often eats strange foods. **For instance,** he once ate cow brains.
- I like to travel. **Specifically,** I enjoy places with old cathedrals.
- I love fruit. **In particular,** I like bananas, pineapple, and berries.
- My friend hates skiing for several reasons. **The first reason** is that she dislikes being cold. **Another reason is** that she often falls.

### Showing a Contrast
- but
- however
- on the other hand
- otherwise
- instead
- in contrast (more formal)

### Examples
- Bill earned an A on his essay, **but** Susan got a B. We wanted to leave at 8:00. **However,** Mike arrived too late.
- She hates housecleaning. **On the other hand,** she doesn't mind cooking.
- Students should attend class. **Otherwise,** they may lose their status.
- I am not going out tonight. **Instead,** I will stay home.
and watch a video. Women usually enjoy shopping. **In contrast**, men often dislike it.

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<th>Showing a Concession</th>
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<tr>
<td>yet</td>
<td>He knows that he should do his homework, <strong>yet</strong> he never does it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>nevertheless (more formal)</td>
<td>I need to wear reading glasses. <strong>Nevertheless</strong>, I hate how I look in them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>even so</td>
<td>I know you don't like to study. <strong>Even so</strong>, you must pass your exam.</td>
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<tr>
<td>however</td>
<td>There are many benefits to exercising. <strong>However</strong>, you must take some precautions to avoid injury.</td>
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<tr>
<td>although</td>
<td><strong>Even though</strong> the book is difficult to read, it is very interesting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>even though</td>
<td><strong>Although</strong> the book is difficult to read, it is very interesting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>despite the fact that . . .</td>
<td><strong>Despite the fact that</strong> Kate is good at tennis, she lost the match.</td>
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<tr>
<td>despite</td>
<td><strong>Despite</strong> Kate's skill at tennis, she lost the match.</td>
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<th>Showing a Similarity</th>
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<tr>
<td>likewise (more formal)</td>
<td>Math was hard for me in high school. <strong>Likewise</strong>, it is hard in college.</td>
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<tr>
<td>similarly (more formal)</td>
<td>Houseplants require much care and attention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>in the same way</td>
<td><strong>Similarly</strong>, outdoor plants must be cared for properly.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rock climbing takes much practice and skill. <strong>In the same way</strong>, learning to write well requires a great deal of practice.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Showing a Result</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>so</td>
<td>Janet passed her exam, <strong>so</strong> she is very happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as a result</td>
<td>Tim was late. <strong>As a result</strong>, we could not go to the concert.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>therefore</td>
<td>James is not feeling well. <strong>Therefore</strong>, he will not be here today.</td>
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<tr>
<td>thus (more formal)</td>
<td>The committee voted against the proposal. <strong>Thus</strong>, we must consider another idea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>as a consequence</td>
<td>I forgot that the cake was in the oven. <strong>As a consequence</strong>, it burned.</td>
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Tina lost her keys. **Consequently,** she could not drive home.

<table>
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<th>Establishing Time Relation or Sequence</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tr>
<td>first</td>
<td><strong>First,</strong> I think that she is studying hard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>second</td>
<td><strong>Second,</strong> I believe that she is a bright student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finally</td>
<td><strong>Finally,</strong> I know that she has great potential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in conclusion</td>
<td><strong>In conclusion,</strong> I feel that she deserves to win the scholarship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in summary</td>
<td><strong>In summary,</strong> we should offer her some financial help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meanwhile</td>
<td>Jeff was working hard to clean the house. <strong>Meanwhile,</strong> his brother was watching television.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Showing a Condition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>I must study hard, <strong>or</strong> I will fail my exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whether . . . or</td>
<td><strong>Whether</strong> you are coming <strong>or</strong> not, I am still going to Amy's party.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if . . . (then)</td>
<td><strong>If</strong> you want to get good grades, <strong>then</strong> you must do your homework.</td>
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<th>Explaining or Emphasizing</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<td>in fact</td>
<td>The bookstore sells cards. <strong>In fact,</strong> they have the best cards around.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>actually</td>
<td>James is <strong>actually</strong> the first person I have known who has been to Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in other words</td>
<td>He was late to class again. <strong>In other words,</strong> he didn't wake up on time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>namely (more formal)</td>
<td>The plan needed only two things to succeed—<strong>namely,</strong> time and money.</td>
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<th>Giving an Alternative</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>We can go to the beach, <strong>or</strong> we can go to the mountains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>either . . . or</td>
<td>You can <strong>either</strong> ride the bus <strong>or</strong> walk to my apartment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neither . . . nor (more formal)</td>
<td>I like <strong>neither</strong> that person <strong>nor</strong> his brother.</td>
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**Punctuation Rules**
1. Coordinating Conjunctions (and, but, or, yet, so):
2. Put a comma before these conjunctions. (Don't use them at the beginning of a sentence in more formal writing.)
3. **example:** The movie has already started, **but** my friend has not arrived yet.

4. 

5. Correlative Conjunctions (These have two parts: either . . . or):
   - Put a comma before the second part if it connects 2 clauses (complete sentences).
   - **example:** Eric is **not only** an outstanding teacher, **but** he is **also** a gourmet cook.
   - You don’t need a comma if it only connects words or phrases.
   - **example:** Eric is **not only** an outstanding teacher **but also** a gourmet cook.

6. 

7. Transitional Words and Phrases:
   - Put a comma after these if they are at the beginning of a sentence.
   - **example:** I like to travel. **Specifically,** I enjoy places with old cathedrals.
   - Use a semicolon to connect the two sentences.
   - **example:** I like to travel; **specifically,** I enjoy places with old cathedrals.
   - Use a comma before and after the transitional word/phrase in the middle of a clause.
   - **example:** I like to travel, and, **specifically,** I enjoy places with old cathedrals.

   ●

**List of Transition Words for Essays**

This structured list of commonly used english transition words (approximately 200, so the list can be considered as quasi complete) can be used (by students and teachers alike) to find the right expression. English transition words are essential, since they not only connect ideas, but also can introduce a certain shift, contrast or opposition, emphasis or agreement, purpose, result or conclusion, etc. in the line of argument.

The transition words and phrases (also called devices) have been assigned only once to somewhat artificial categories, although some words belong to more than one category.

**Transition Words**

To improve your writing (in essays, (scientific) reviews, research papers, letters, abstracts, reports, thesis, etc), it is essential to understand how, transition words can be used to combine ideas in writing. It is also fundamental to be aware of the sometimes subtle meaning of transition words within the english language.
**Agreement / Addition / Similarity**

The transitional devices like *also, in addition, and, likewise, add information, reinforce ideas,* and *express agreement* with preceding material.

- in the first place
- not only ... but also
- as a matter of fact
- in like manner
- in addition
- coupled with
- in the same fashion / way
- first, second, third
- in the light of
- not to mention
- to say nothing of
- equally important
- by the same token
- again
- to
- and
- also
- then
- equally
- identically
- uniquely
- like
- as
- too
- moreover
- as well as
- together with
- of course
- likewise
- comparatively
- correspondingly
- similarly
- furthermore
- additionally

**Opposition / Limitation / Contradiction**

Transition phrases like *but, rather and or,* express that there is evidence to the *contrary* or point out *alternatives,* and thus introduce a change the line of reasoning (*contrast*).
although this may be true
in contrast
different from
of course ..., but
on the other hand
on the contrary
at the same time
in spite of
even so / though
be that as it may
then again
above all
in reality
after all
but
(and) still
unlike
or
(and) yet
while
albeit
besides
although
instead
whereas
despite
considerably
otherwise
however
rather
nevertheless
regardless
notwithstanding

Examples / Support / Emphasis

These transitional devices (like especially) are used to introduce examples as support, to indicate importance or as an illustration so that an idea is cued to the reader.
in other words
to put it differently
for one thing
as an illustration
in this case
for this reason
to put it another way
that is to say
with attention to
by all means
important to realize
another key point
first thing to remember
most compelling evidence
must be remembered
point often overlooked
to point out
on the positive / negative side
with this in mind
notably
including
like
to be sure
namely
chiefly
truly
indeed
certainly
surely
markedly
especially
specifically
expressively
surprisingly
frequently
significantly
in fact
in general
in particular
in detail
for example
for instance
to demonstrate
to emphasize
to repeat
to clarify
to explain
to enumerate
such as

**Cause / Condition / Purpose**

These transitional phrases present specific conditions or intentions. in the event that
granted (that)
as / so long as
on (the) condition (that)
for the purpose of
with this intention
with this in mind
in the hope that
to the end that
for fear that
in order to
seeing / being that
in view of
If
... then
unless
when
whenever
since
while
because of
as
since
while
lest
in case
provided that
given that
only / even if
so that
so as to
owing to
inasmuch as
due to

**Effect / Consequence / Result**

Some of these transition words (thus, then, accordingly, consequently, therefore, henceforth) are time words that are used to show that after a particular time there was a consequence or
an effect.
Note that for and because are placed before the cause/reason. The other devices are placed before the consequences or effects.
as a result
under those circumstances
in that case
for this reason
for
thus
because the
then
hence
consequently
therefore
thereupon
forthwith
accordingly
henceforth

Conclusion / Summary / Restatement
These transition words and phrases conclude, summarize and/or restate ideas, or a indicate a final general statement. Also some words (like therefore) from the Effect / Consequence category can be used to summarize.
as can be seen
generally speaking
in the final analysis
all things considered
as shown above
in the long run
given these points
as has been noted
in a word
for the most part
after all
in fact
in summary
in conclusion
in short
in brief
in essence
to summarize
on balance
altogether
overall
ordinarily
usually
by and large
to sum up
on the whole
in any event
in either case
all in all

**Time / Chronology / Sequence**

These transitional words (like *finally*) have the function of limiting, restricting, and defining *time*. They can be used either alone or as part of *adverbial expressions*.

- at the present time
- from time to time
- sooner or later
- at the same time
- up to the present time
- to begin with
- in due time
- until now
- as soon as
- in the meantime
- in a moment
- without delay
- in the first place
- all of a sudden
- at this instant
- immediately
- quickly
- finally
- after
- later
- last
- until
- since
- then
- before
- hence
- since
- when
once
about
next
now
formerly
suddenly
shortly
henceforth
whenever
eventually
meanwhile
further
during
first, second
in time
prior to
forthwith
straightaway
instantly
presently
occasionally

Many transition words in the time category (consequently; first, second, third; further; hence; henceforth; since; then, when; and whenever) have other uses. Except for the numbers (first, second, third) and further they add a meaning of time in expressing conditions, qualifications, or reasons. The numbers are also used to add information or list examples. Further is also used to indicate added space as well as added time.

**Space / Location / Place**

These transition words are often used as part of adverbial expressions and have the function to restrict, limit or qualify space. Quite a few of these are also found in the Time category and can be used to describe spatial order or spatial reference.
in the middle
to the left/right
in front of
on this side
in the distance
here and there
in the foreground
in the background
in the center of
adjacent to
opposite to
here
there
next
where
from
over
near
above
below
down
up
under
further
beyond
nearby
wherever
around
between
before
alongside
amid
among
beneath
beside
behind
across

Usage of Transition Words in Essays

Transition words and phrases are vital devices for essays, papers or other literary compositions. They improve the connections and transitions between sentences and paragraphs. They thus give the text a logical organization and structure (see also: a List of Synonyms).

All english transition words and phrases (sometimes also called 'conjunctive adverbs') do the same work as coordinating conjunctions: they connect two words, phrases or clauses together and thus the text is easier to read and the coherence is improved.

Usage: transition words are used with a special rule for punctuation: a semicolon or a period is used after the first 'sentence', and a comma is almost always used to set off the transition word from the second 'sentence'.

Example 1:
People use 43 muscles when they frown; however, they use only 28 muscles when they smile.

Example 2:

However, transition words can also be placed at the beginning of a new paragraph or sentence - not only to indicate a step forward in the reasoning, but also to relate the new material to the preceding thoughts.

Use a semicolon to connect sentences, only if the group of words on either side of the semicolon are a complete sentence each (both must have a subject and a verb, and could thus stand alone as a complete thought).

Please feel free to download the corresponding and comprehensive 2 page cheat sheet » Transition Words and Phrases (and "Conjunctions") as a PDF (approx. 30 KB). It contains all the transition words listed on this site.