

## JOHNSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

### CONJUNCTIONS

**Conjunctions are connecting words that link words, phrases or clauses.** Conjunctions join similar grammatical elements: noun or pronoun to noun or pronoun; verb to verb; adjective to adjective; adverb to adverb; preposition to preposition; even conjunction to conjunction; phrase to phrase; and clause to clause.

1. Conjunctions allow us to assert more than one action and tell about more than one person or thing, thus economizing and varying our sentence structures, as well as connecting our ideas. Like prepositions, conjunctions do not have inflection. Because they are so similar to prepositions, they are mainly identified by their function in the sentence.

2. There are several types of conjunctions.

a. **Coordinating conjunctions** are conjunctions that connect words, phrases, and clauses of equal rank or similar grammatical function. The following words are listed by various grammar books as coordinating conjunctions:

and    nor    but    yet    or    so    for

Punctuation when using coordinate conjunctions is as follows:

When joining two words, phrases or dependent/subordinates clauses, no comma is used.

Examples:

words: Mary **and** Jane came to the Writing Center often.

phrases: Mary corrected her essay **and** handed it in.

subordinate clauses: The teacher asked Mary what help she received **and** why she received it.

When joining more than two words, phrases, or subordinate/dependent clauses, a comma is used between each section of the series and may or may not be used before the coordinating conjunction.

Example:

Mary asked questions, received answers(,) **and** did well on her essay.

When joining two independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction, a comma should be placed before the conjunction. NOTE: Some teachers might allow the comma to be eliminated if the independent clauses are very short.

Example:

Mary went to the Writing Center, **but** John went home.

b. **Correlative coordinating conjunctions** function like coordinating conjunctions but are used in pairs. One part appears in the first section being connected, and the other part appears before the second section. Some common correlative coordinating conjunctions are

either...or    both...and    neither...nor    not only...but (also)

whether...or    the more...the more    the more...the less    as...as

(just) as...so    such...as    no (or not)...or    not so much

(that)...as.

Examples:

**The more** you visit the Writing Center, **the more** your writing will improve.

**Neither** Mary **nor** John received good grades on their essays.

c. **Subordinating conjunctions** are conjunctions that connect dependent or subordinate clauses to independent clauses, introduce the dependent clause, and indicate the relationship between the dependent and independent clause. The five meanings which subordinate conjunctions may convey are condition (unless), cause (because), time (after), manner (as), contrast (although). A list of subordinating conjunctions follows:

after    if only    although (though)    in as much as

as    in case    as if    insofar as

as long as    no matter how (no matter when, etc.)

as though	once	because	rather than
before	since	even though	that
if	the day (minute, hour, year, etc.)		unless
until	when	whenever	where
wherever	while		

Subordinating conjunctions ending in *that*:

assuming that	not that	except that	on the grounds that
for fear that	proving (ed) that		given (granted) that
save that	in the hope(s) that		seeing that
in order that	so that		

Examples:

**When** John received a poor grade on his essay, he went to the Writing Center.

**Now that** you are doing better, I hope you will come by.

Mary did well on her essay **because** she visited the Writing Center frequently.

Punctuating the subordinate clause is important. A comma should follow an introductory adverb clause. If the subordinate/dependent clause is nonessential, commas should be placed before and after the clause. See the section on clauses for further explanation.

d. Like coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions may also come in pairs. The common **subordinating correlative conjunctions** are

if...then	no sooner...than	scarcely...when	so...that
and such...that			

Examples:

**If** Mary is not going, **then** neither am I.

**No sooner** had John left **than** Susie arrived.

e. **Adverbial conjunctions** serve as a link between two independent clauses. They differ from the coordinating conjunction because they are not limited to one position and they are punctuated differently.

Examples:

Coordinating conjunction

Mary is cute, **but** Suzie is cuter.

Adverbial conjunction

Mary is cute; however, Suzie is cuter.

Mary is cute. However, Suzie is cuter.

Mary is cute. Suzie is cuter, however.

Mary is cute; Suzie, however, is cuter.

NOTE: The writer has several choices when using adverbial conjunctions. Note also the punctuation in each sentence.

The primary adverbial conjunctions and their meanings are listed below:

**Illustration:**

for example

incidentally

namely

that it

**Addition:**

after all

also

besides

further (more)

likewise

moreover

second

similarly

**Contrast:**

alternatively  
however  
in contrast  
instead  
nevertheless  
on the other hand  
otherwise  
still

**Qualification:**

certainly  
indeed  
in fact  
perhaps  
possibly  
undoubtedly

**Result:**

accordingly  
as a result  
consequently  
hence  
therefore  
thus

**Attitude:**

frankly  
happily  
unfortunately  
luckily

**Summary:**

in other words  
in summary  
to conclude

**Time:**

at first  
finally  
meanwhile  
now  
then  
thereafter

NOTE: As with other words, these conjunctions listed can function as other parts of speech. Remember to identify any word by its function in the particular sentence structure being studied, rather than its classification out of text.

### Practice Exercise A

Underline the coordinating and correlative coordinating conjunctions in the following sentences.

Example: 1. Mary likes to work in the Writing Center, **but** John does not.

2. Susie and Jane did their research in the library, but John didn't.
3. Procrastinating over his studies, John not only turns in his papers late, but also gets poor grades.
4. Neither Jane nor Mary wants to see John again.
5. Taking her time and being careful, Mary wrote a good essay.
6. Use dictionaries, the sources, and grammar handbooks when you are writing your essays.
7. The Writing Center gave workshops on punctuation and proofreading skills.
8. The more John procrastinates, the less enthusiasm he has for his homework.
9. We are going to have to help him, or he will fail.
10. It's not so much that he doesn't know how to do the work, as it is that he won't.

### Practice Exercise B

Underline all of the subordinating and correlative subordinating conjunctions in the following sentences.

Example: 1. **When** Mary was finished, she handed her paper to the teacher.

2. Mary does not know if her paper will be finished in time.
3. It is as though he doesn't even care.
4. No sooner had Mary put her composition down than the teacher had read it.
5. After she had learned to write, Mary felt confident.

6. If you do not get finished soon, then you will have to return tomorrow.
7. Wherever you go, I will follow.
8. For fear that he will fail, John tried to finish his paper.
9. Assuming that he was finished, the waitress took John's plate.
10. He will go with us even though he is sick.

### **Practice Exercise C**

Punctuate the following sentences with the necessary commas; not all require punctuation.

- Example: 1. Neither Bob nor John could find his paper. **Correct.**
2. The sandwiches were hamburgers and hot dogs and the drinks were beer and iced tea.
  3. When we arrived at the party Suzie was already there.
  4. Mary greeted the guests and took their coats.
  5. John drank too much danced too long then passed out.
  6. Some couples danced while the others walked in the garden.
  7. Because he ate too much John became ill.
  8. Let's have another party next week and we can invite the same people.
  9. Since you brought the food I'll bring the beer.
  10. I am very tired now so I think I'll go home and rest.

### **Practice Exercise D**

Write a paragraph of 8-10 sentences using no prepositions or conjunctions.