

**APSU Writing Center**  
Transitional Words and Phrases

**Transitional Words**

- Act as bridges between ideas, guiding readers smoothly from one point to the next and clarifying an author's logic.
- Ensure you fully understand their meaning so your writing flows naturally.
- Overusing transitions can make writing feel forced or distract from the main message.

**Questions to Ask When Choosing Transitional Words**

- How does this idea relate to the previous one?
- Does it support the same argument or present another viewpoint?
- Are the two ideas dependent on each other?
- What effect do you want to create for the reader?
- Should one idea stand out more than the other?

**We use transitional sentences to...**

- Show how one idea relates to another.
- Help the audience follow the order of events.
- Provide support and clarification to our ideas.
- Reinforce the main idea before moving on to a new topic.

**Transitions By Type**

- **Coordinating Conjunctions:** and, but, so.
- **Subordinating Conjunctions:** because, if, when.
- **Conjunctive Adverbs:** however, additionally, consequently.
- **Prepositions:** despite, because of, in spite of.

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Transitions By Function

## **Transitions By Function**

### **Causation**

Shows how one thing leads to another.

- Causation words: because, therefore, thus, hence, as a result, consequently, accordingly.
  - **Example:** I chose strong evidence **because** it supports my thesis directly.

### **Chronology**

Shows the order in which events occur.

- Chronology words: after, afterwards, during, earlier, following, immediately, in the meantime, later, next.
  - **Example:** I revised the conclusion **following** my professor's feedback.

### **Addition / Combination**

Links multiple elements to show they work together or add to a whole.

- Combination words: also, besides, further, next, finally, second, additionally.
  - **Example:** I drafted each paragraph and **finally** wrote a clear conclusion.

### **Contrast**

Highlights differences between two ideas or elements.

- Contrast words: although, but, despite, however, though, otherwise.
  - **Example:** I wrote quickly **despite** being tired from studying all night.

### **Importance**

Emphasizes what is most significant versus less critical.

- Importance words: primarily, chiefly, mainly, foundationally.
  - **Example:** I fixed typos, which were of less importance than strengthening my evidence.

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**Location**

Shows where something is in relation to other elements.

- Location words: above, below, beyond, here, nearby, there.
  - **Example:** I'll discuss my research methods **here** before moving on to results.

**Clarification**

Restates or explains an idea for better understanding.

- Clarification words: to explain, to clarify, that is, in other words.
  - **Example:** I used three sources in my essay **to explain** the issue from multiple perspectives.

**Concession**

Acknowledges an opposing viewpoint or limitation while showing your understanding.

- Concession words: naturally, granted, of course.
  - **Example:** **Of course**, you should cite all your sources to avoid plagiarism.

**Conclusion**

Signals a summary or closing statement.

- Conclusion words: finally, lastly, in conclusion, in the end, to conclude.
  - **Example:** **In conclusion**, strong evidence and clear organization make an essay persuasive.

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Transitional Words Quick Guide

Review each transiton type and use example words to create your own sentence in the blank boxes below.

**Causation:** Shows how one thing leads to another.

- Examples: because, therefore, thus, hence, as a result, consequently, accordingly

**Chronology:** Shows the border of events.

- Examples: after, afterwards, during, earlier, following, immediately, later, next

**Addition / Combination:** Links elements together.

- Examples: also, besides, further, moreover, finally, additionally, second

**Contrast:** Highlights differences between two ideas or elements.

- Examples: although, but, despite, however, though, otherwise

**Importance:** Emphasizes what is most significant versus less critical.

- Examples: primarily, chiefly, mainly, foundationally

**Location:** Shows where something is in relation to other elements.

- Examples: above, below, beyond, here, nearby, there

**Clarification:** Restates or explains an idea.

- Examples: explain, clarify, that is, in other words

**Conclusion:** Signals a summary or closing statement.

- Examples: finally, lastly, in conclusion, in the end, to conclude



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### References

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