



APSU Writing Center

Transitional Words and Phrases

Transitional Words and Phrases

- Using transitional words and phrases helps papers to read more smoothly and enables the reader to flow from one point to the next without gaps in thought. Transitions enhance the writer's logical organization and the readers' understanding through improving the connections between thoughts and main points.
- Transitional words and phrases are not needed in every sentence. In fact, overuse can lose the effectiveness of the writing. However, when used correctly, the writer's main ideas become clear and enhanced.
- The following lists illustrate categories of relationships between ideas, followed by words and phrases that connect them. A few sample sentences are included. Keep in mind that this is not an exhaustive list. Consult other writing sources (such as the LB Brief Handbook) for more examples.

Addition/Continuation

(Main idea: Warning: there are more ideas to come.)

- Additionally
- Also
- And
- As well as
- Besides
- Equally important
- For example
- In the same way
- For instance
- Furthermore
- In addition
- Similarly

Examples of Addition Use:

- Besides being a dedicated mother, Margaret is *also* a talented professor.
- Margaret is a dedicated mother, *and* she is a talented professor.

Cause/Effect/Purpose/Condition

(Main idea: Condition or modification is developing.)

- Accordingly
- Consequently
- Therefore
- If
- In order that
- Thus
- As a result
- Initially
- Until
- Subsequently
- Ultimately
- Because
- Unless
- So that
- In consequence

Examples of Cause/Effect/Purpose/Condition Use:

- *Unless* the bald tires are changed, the vehicle is unsafe to drive.
- Drivers who fail to decrease their speed in areas where roads are being repaired will *subsequently* be stopped by the police who will *thus* give them traffic tickets.

Comparison

(Main idea: We will now show how idea/thing B is the same as idea/thing A.)

- Again
- Also
- Analogous to
- And
- As well as
- Still
- Equally important
- Even/evenly
- In the same way
- Too
- Like
- Likewise
- Much as
- Same as
- Similarly



APSU Writing Center

Transitional Words and Phrases

Examples of Comparison Use:

- To prepare for a job interview, Taiesha ironed her suit; *likewise*, Claude polished his shoes.
- The amount of coffee in the cup was *as much as* the mixture of milk and sugar.

Contrast

(Main idea: We will now show how idea B is different from idea A.)

- And yet
- Although
- But
- Either
- Even though
- Nonetheless
- Nevertheless
- Instead
- However
- On the other hand

Example of Contrast Use:

- Sharon desires to attend college; *however*, she hasn't been accepted into a university.

Concession

(Main idea: After weighing your ideas with those of someone else's or other resources, you or the other person/resource may be right.)

- Granted
- Naturally
- Of course

Examples of Concession Use:

- *Granted*, while the idea of forcing all citizens to have health insurance ideally protects them from paying high out-of-pocket costs, not everyone can afford to buy insurance.
- *Naturally*, people want to be able to go to the doctor whenever they are sick, but *of course*, they choose not to go when they cannot afford the cost.

Emphasis

(Main idea: This is important.)

- A central issue/idea
- Most of all
- Especially important
- Above All
- A key feature
- A significant factor
- Of course
- Ultimately

Example of Emphasis Use

- A significant factor for the implementation of rules in the workplace is to establish proper ethics of professionalism and behavior. But most of all, rules dictate appropriate action.

Example/Illustration

(Main idea: Here is what that principle is like in reality.)

- After all
- Even
- In other words
- Similar to
- As an illustration
- In fact
- Much like
- Specifically
- For instance
- In the same way as
- Of course
- Such as



APSU Writing Center

Transitional Words and Phrases

Example of Example/Illustration Use:

- *After all*, careless spending will result in a waste of funds.
- *To illustrate*, failure to compare prices of computers can result in waste of money from buying at a store that charges too much.

Order/Sequence

(Main ideas: There is an order to these ideas. When is it happening?)

- Again
- After
- Then
- As long as
- Before
- As
- Already
- Eventually
- First
- During
- Meanwhile
- Moreover
- Secondly
- Thereafter
- Simultaneously
- As though
- Soon
- Next
- Subsequently
- Before
- Finally
- Immediately

Examples of Order/Sequence Use:

- *Initially*, some students become anxious *before* they write their papers.
- *First of all*, they need to develop confidence in their writing skills; *subsequently*, they will be better able to complete their assignments.

Summary/Conclusion

(Main idea: This ends the discussion, but it has special importance.)

- All in all
- Consequently
- In conclusion
- Last of all
- Altogether
- Finally
- In other words
- On the whole
- As has been said
- From this conclusion
- In summary
- Therefore

Examples of Summary/Conclusion Use:

- *Finally*, the end result of this study is to show that use of other people's prescription medications is not a wise idea; hence, medications should not be shared with others.
- *In conclusion*, people who use medications from other's prescriptions run the risk of suffering serious side effects, *altogether* with being sued for unintentional malpractice.