

Transition Words

As a "part of speech" **transition words** are used to link words, phrases or sentences. They help the reader to progress from one idea (expressed by the author) to the next idea. Thus, they help to build up coherent relationships within the text.

Transitional Words

This structured list of commonly used English **transition words** — approximately 200, can be considered as quasi complete. It 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 have been assigned only once to somewhat artificial categories, although some words belong to more than one category.

There is some overlapping with » **prepositions** and postpositions, but for the purpose of usage and completeness of this concise guide, I did not differentiate.

AGREEMENT / ADDITION / SIMILARITY

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

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

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	but	although
in contrast	(and) still	instead
different from	unlike	whereas
of course ..., but	or	despite

on the other hand	(and) yet	conversely
on the contrary	while	otherwise
at the same time	albeit	however
in spite of	besides	rather
even so / though	as much as	nevertheless
be that as it may	even though	nonetheless
then again		regardless
above all		notwithstanding
in reality		
after all		

CAUSE / CONDITION / PURPOSE

These transitional phrases present specific **conditions** or **intentions**.

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

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	notably	in fact
to put it differently	including	in general
for one thing	like	in particular
as an illustration	to be sure	in detail
in this case	namely	for example
for this reason	chiefly	for instance
to put it another way	truly	to demonstrate

that is to say

with attention to

by all means

indeed

certainly

surely

markedly

such as

to emphasize

to repeat

to clarify

to explain

to enumerate

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 side

on the negative side

with this in mind

especially

explicitly

specifically

expressly

surprisingly

frequently

significantly

particularly

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

in effect

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 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

after all

in fact

in summary

in conclusion

by and large

to sum up

on the whole

in any event

as shown above
in the long run
given these points
as has been noted
in a word
for the most part

in short
in brief
in essence
to summarize
on balance
altogether
overall
ordinarily
usually

in either case
all in all
Obviously
Ultimately
Definitely

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
as soon as
as long as
in the meantime
in a moment
without delay
in the first place
all of a sudden
at this instant
first, second

after
later
last
until
till
since
then
before
hence
since
when
once
about
next
now

henceforth
whenever
eventually
meanwhile
further
during
in time
prior to
forthwith
straightaway
by the time
whenever
until now
now that

immediately
quickly
finally

formerly
suddenly
shortly

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	here	further
to the left/right	there	beyond
in front of	next	nearby
on this side	where	wherever
in the distance	from	around
here and there	over	between
in the foreground	near	before
in the background	above	alongside
in the center of	below	amid
	down	among
adjacent to	up	beneath
opposite to	under	beside
		behind
		across

List of Transition Words

Transition Words are also sometimes called (or put in the category of) Connecting Words. Please feel free to *download* them via this link to the category page:

» [Linking Words & Connecting Words as a PDF](#).

It contains all the **transition words** listed on this site. The image to the left gives you an impression how it looks like.

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 is a complete sentence each (both must have a subject and a verb, and could thus stand alone as a complete thought).

Further helpful readings about expressions, writing and grammar: [Compilation of Writing Tips](#) » [How to write good](#) | [Correct Spelling](#) » [Study by an English University](#)

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