

# 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.

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

### 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**).

<b>although this may be true</b>	<b>but</b>	<b>although</b>
<b>in contrast</b>	<b>(and) still</b>	<b>instead</b>
<b>different from</b>	<b>unlike</b>	<b>whereas</b>
<b>of course ..., but</b>	<b>or</b>	<b>despite</b>

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.

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

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### 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).

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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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