

## COORDINATION

In order for the following to make sense, you need to understand the difference between a phrase and a clause (dependent or independent).

A **phrase** is a group of words that does not express a complete thought. It might have a subject or a verb, but it does not have both. As a result, the phrase does not make sense standing by itself:

Waiting at the street corner

Tired from working all day

This morning at school

By contrast, a **clause** has a *subject* and a verb that goes with the subject; a clause makes sense by itself.

John waited at the street corner.

He is tired from working all day.

The above examples are called **independent clauses** because they make sense on their own. However, if you put a “dependent clause marker” (or subordinating conjunction) in front of them, they lose their independence. They are now called dependent clauses because they need another independent clause to make sense as part of a complex sentence.

**While** John waited at the street corner, (his friend looked for him at school.)

**Although** he is tired from working all day, (he plays ball with his kids at night).

Coordination occurs if two independent clauses are linked together by **coordinating conjunctions** or **conjunctive adverbs** (see box below), resulting in a **compound sentence**. In a compound sentence, all clauses remain independent; they could stand on their own. **Transitional phrases** often link independent clauses as well.

If you use a coordinating conjunction to join two independent clauses, put a comma before the conjunction: *Camilla loves children, so she wants to be a kindergarten teacher*. If you use a conjunctive adverb or a transitional phrase, use a semicolon or a period before the adverb/transitional phrase and a comma after: *Tom is not a morning person; therefore, he does not like to get up at 6:00 a.m.*

**Inappropriate coordination** occurs if two clauses are linked together that have very little to do with each other: *Portnoy hates it when the Monkey calls him at work, but he loves chopped liver*.

Avoid **excessive coordination**, the stringing together of clauses with FANBOYS: *Connie is a sturdy young woman with reddish brown hair, and she has been married to Clifford for three years, and Clifford is in a wheelchair, so Connie is sexually frustrated, and then she meets Mellors, and immediately the chemistry ignites, so they have an affair, but Clifford finds out, and the affair is over, yet Connie’s passion burns brightly*.

**Coordinating conjunctions:** the FANBOYS: *for* (reason), *and* (addition), *nor* (negative choice), *but* (contrast), *or* (choice), *yet* (contrast), *so* (result or effect)

**Conjunctive adverbs:**

Addition: also, furthermore, moreover, besides, finally

Contrast: however, still, nevertheless, nonetheless, conversely, nonetheless, instead, otherwise, still

Comparison: similarly, likewise

Result or summary: therefore, thus, consequently, accordingly, hence, then

Time: next, then, meanwhile, finally, subsequently

Emphasis: indeed, certainly, specifically

**Transitional Phrases:**

Addition: in addition, equally important

Contrast: on the other hand, in contrast, at the same time, on the contrary, even so

Comparison: in the same way

Concession: of course, to be sure, certainly, granted, admittedly

Example: for example, for instance, as an illustration, namely, specifically, in fact

Summary/Result: in short, in brief, in summary, in conclusion, as a result, accordingly

Time/Ranking: first, second, third (...), next, finally, afterwards, meanwhile, subsequently, eventually, in the first place, at the same time,

► Did you like the sample sentences? Get the whole story in Philip Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint* and D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.