

Conjunctions

A conjunction is a joining word, a word that connects (joins) parts of a sentence.

Coordinating Conjunctions

There are seven coordinating **conjunctions** (and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet). To remember them, you might want to learn this acronym: **FANBOYS**.

F = for

A = and

N = nor

B = but

O = or

Y = yet

S = so

“and” links two noun phrases.

- We have tickets for the symphony and the opera.
- The orchestra rehearses on Tuesday, but the chorus rehearses on Wednesday.

“or” (verb + verb)

- Have you seen or heard the opera by Scott Joplin?

“so” (sentence + sentence)

- I wanted to sit in the front of the balcony, so I ordered my tickets early

“for” (independent clauses)

- She was a good leader for she could delegate well.

“nor” negative clause + affirmative clause which has a negative meaning

- He hasn't written, nor has he called me. (Note that the subject and auxiliary verb are inverted after nor).

“Yet” joins two contrasting ideas

- I want to lose weight, yet I eat chocolate daily.

Practice

Choose the correct answer from a, b, c , or d:

1. The bus stopped _____ the man got off.

a- and

b- but

c. for

c- or

2. We did not prepare for the meeting, _____did we send emails to the attendees.

a- and

b- nor

c- but

d- so

3. I wanted to buy a newspaper _____ I didn't have enough money.

a- and

b- yet

c- or

d. for

4. He's so nice _____ he doesn't have enough money.

a- but

b- and

c- or

d- so

5. Do you want tea _____ coffee?

a- for

b. and

c- but

d- or

Paired (Correlative) Conjunctions

Correlative (paired) conjunctions are used in pairs, in order to show the relationship between the ideas expressed in different parts of a sentence. For instance, in the following example, the expression either ... or is used to indicate that the ideas expressed in the two clauses represent two alternative choices of action.

- Either you should study harder, or you should take a different course.

The most commonly used correlative conjunctions are both ... and, either ... or and neither ... nor. In the table below, each pair of correlative conjunctions is accompanied by an example of its use.

both ... and	• He is both intelligent and good-natured.
either ... or	• I will either go for a walk or read a book.
neither ... nor	• He is neither rich nor famous.
not only ... but also	• She is not only clever, but also hard-working.

Important Points About Paired Conjunctions

1. Both words in the conjunction should be present. Do not leave out one part of the conjunction.

- **INCORRECT:** Paul is not only tall but strong.
- **CORRECT:** Paul is not only tall but also strong.

2. When a singular and a plural subject are joined by the pair-word conjunctions either/or, neither/nor and not only/but also (NOT both/and), the verb will agree with the subject closest to the verb.

- **INCORRECT:** Neither his brother nor his sisters was there.
- **CORRECT:** Neither his brother nor his sisters were there.
- **CORRECT:** Neither his sisters nor his brother was there.

3. Elements joined by pair-word conjunctions should be **parallel**.

- **INCORRECT:** I like both reading and to write.
- **CORRECT:** I like both reading and writing.

Practice:

1. He is neither my uncle _____ my cousin.

- a. and
- b. or
- c. but
- d. nor

2. _____ Mariam and Ahmed can swim.

- a. As
- b. Neither
- c. Either
- d. Both

3. For lunch, you may have _____ chicken or fish.

- a. both
- b. neither
- c. not only
- d. either

4. You will have to buy _____ the blue shirt _____ the red. They don't have the green one in your size.

- a. neither - nor
- b. both - and
- c. neither - not
- b. either - or

5. The book was neither interesting _____ well written.

- a. or
- b. and
- c. nor
- b. either

Subordinating Conjunctions

(When, whenever, after, before, since, where, wherever, because , as , in order to , for , so that , if , unless , just as , although , even though , while , whereas)

Subordination uses a subordinating conjunction to make one clause dependent on another. The dependent clause is subordinate to the independent clause.

I can't go to the cinema until my mother comes.	
	
independent clause	dependent clause

The list of subordinating conjunctions is long, but here are some of the more common ones:

Relationship	Conjunctions	Examples
Time	When Whenever After Until Before Since	• I will phone you when I arrive. • I promise to help you whenever you ask. • My uncle always calls after he watches the news • I never knew what happiness meant until I met you. • Before you go, sign the logbook. • I have been working as a teacher since 1986.
Place	Where Wherever	• I know a place where blackberries grow wild all along the roadside. • Wherever you can find an empty spot, just drop your luggage there.
Reason	Because Since As	• The cat took off in a panic because the dog started barking and growling. • Since you have to leave early, why don't you arrive a few days earlier too? • As I work six days per week, I can't even find time to see my friends.
Purpose (positive/ negative)	To In order to For So that	• I'm travelling to Egypt to visit my family. • I'm working hard in order to pass my exams with flying colours. • Most of the visitors were happy just sitting in the shade, for it had been a long trip on the train. • I'm learning English so that I can get a better job.
Condition	If Unless	• If my ticket doesn't arrive today, I won't be able to fly out tomorrow. • He won't listen to you unless you make him turn off the radio and look at you.
Comparison	Just as	• It is a waste of energy to be angry with a man who behaves badly, just as it is to be angry with a car that won't go.

Contrast	Although even though While Whereas	• Although I have called repeatedly, the credit card company has not corrected my account. • He still brings her roses even though he knows she is allergic to them. • Bob is very tall while Bill is very short. • I like to go out, whereas my husband likes to stay at home.
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If you look carefully at the example sentences, you'll notice an important punctuation rule that applies to subordination: Place a comma after, but not before a dependent clause. Therefore, whether or not you use a comma depends on the order of clauses in the sentence

- After the final touchdown, the fans stormed out onto the field.
(Dependent clause, comma, independent clause)
- The fans stormed out onto the field after the final touchdown.
(Independent clause, no comma, dependent clause)

Practice:

1. _____ it was raining, I didn't get wet.

- a. Although
- b. Because
- c. Just as
- d if

2. Mona couldn't buy any Eid presents _____ she didn't have any money.

- a. whereas
- b. because
- c. to
- d even though

3. _____ my wife likes to travel abroad, I prefer to stay at home for my vacations.

- a. Whereas
- b. As
- c. Since
- d So that

4. Jerry passed the exam first time, _____ I had to retake it three times.

- a. as
- b. even though
- c. although
- d. while

5. I will be late today _____ my car has broken down.

- a. because
- b. though
- c. even though
- d. unless

6. _____ Fatima doesn't speak English, she can't go to university in Canada.

- a. Whereas
- b. Since
- c. Whenever
- d. After

7. Aliya got the job _____ she had no experience.

- a. as
- b. whereas
- c. even though
- d. until

8. I don't drink coffee _____ it makes me nervous.

- a. while
- b. although
- c. when
- d. because

9. Some apples are red, _____ others are green.

- a. so that
- b. unless
- c. while
- d. wherever

10 The ship could not move _____ there was no wind.

- a. since
- b. In order to
- c. just as
- d. even though

11. Surfing is fun _____ it can be dangerous.

- a. as
- b. in order to
- c. because
- d. although

12. I took my umbrella _____ it was raining.

- a. in order to
- b. whereas
- c. just as
- d. unless

13. You should stay away from bears _____ they are dangerous.

- a. because
- b. even though
- c. while
- d. after

14. Deer are cute _____ they eat all your flowers.

- a. although
- b. for
- c. because
- d. wherever

15. _____ I work six days per week, I can't even find time to socialize with my friends.

- a. Although
- b. Even though
- c. As
- d. Whereas