Time ans sequence

A *When / As soon as*

The meaning of these two time expressions is almost the same, but **as soon as** suggests something more immediate or important.

I'll phone my uncle **when** / **as soon as** I get home.
As soon as / **When** you've finished this exercise, you can go home.

Common mistakes

I'll see you **when** I **get** there. (NOT I'll see you when I ~~will~~ get there.)
We don't use a future form after *when / as soon as*.

B Two things happening at the same time

Violet got ready **while** I cooked the dinner. [two long actions]
The accident happened **while** I was on my way to work. [a longer action 'on my way to work' and a short action 'the accident'; we can also use **when** or **as** here.]
I saw him (**just**) **as** I came out of the office. [two short actions happening at the same time; we can also use **when** here]

C One thing after another

We met the others in the café, and **then** / **after that** / **afterwards** we went to the match.
I talked to Joe, and **afterwards** [at a later time but usually the same day] I came home.
I was in Caracas for three months, and **then** / **after that** I went to Colombia.
After my visit to New York, I decided to have a rest.
We had something to eat **before** going out.

Common mistakes

After **seeing** the film, we went home.
(NOT After ~~see~~ the film, we went home.)

D A sequence* of actions

We had a really nice holiday. **First of all** / **First** we spent a few days in St Moritz. **After that** / **Then** we drove down the coast and stayed in Portofino for a week. **Finally**, we went back to Switzerland to stay with my uncle. (*Finally* is used here to introduce the last thing in a list.)

* one action after another, and so on

E *At first ... eventually*

To begin with, the two girls got on very well when they shared the flat. But after **a while** [a period of time], they started arguing about various things, and **eventually** [finally, after a long time or a lot of problems] Lauren walked out and found a new place.

At first I enjoyed the classes, but after a while it got a bit boring, and **in the end** [finally, after a period of time or thought] I left.

F A list of reasons

We can use **firstly** / **for one thing** / **for a start** to introduce a first reason for something, and then **secondly**/**besides**/**anyway** to add a further reason.

A: What's wrong with her new dress?
B: **Firstly**, it's a horrible colour, and **secondly**, I don't think it suits her.

A: Why can't we go out tonight?
B: Well, **for one thing** / **for a start**, I've got a lot of work – and **besides**/**anyway**, I can't afford it.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Find five more pairs of words/phrases that are similar in meaning.

~~then~~	for one thing	when	besides	finally	at first	for a start
in the end	~~after that~~	to begin with	as soon as	anyway		

then / after that ....

....

....

Choose the correct word to complete the sentences. Sometimes both are correct.

1 I rang my mum *when / while* I was waiting for my train.
2 I'll give them your message as soon as I *get / will get* there.
3 Maria cleaned the kitchen *as / while* I did the bathroom.
4 Before *leave / leaving* they went to an exhibition in a little gallery.
5 We can have lunch *when / as soon as* we've finished this.
6 The phone rang *while / just as* I was shutting the front door.
7 We spent the morning in the park and *after that / afterwards* we went home for lunch.
8 The letter arrived *while / just as* we were having lunch.
9 I met the others *when / as* I was on my way to the station.
10 After *to clean / cleaning* my room, I was exhausted.

Complete the dialogues.

1 A: Why do you want to stay in this evening, when we could go to Karl's party?
B: Well, *for one thing* ....., I'd like to watch a programme on TV, and ....., I don't think it'll be a very good party.
2 A: What did you do in Portugal?
B: Well, ... we flew to Lisbon and spent a few days there. ..... we took the train down to Lagos and spent a week on the Algarve with a couple we met in London. And ..... we went to Faro and flew back from there.
3 A: Did Matt enjoy his time in India?
B: Well, ... I think he found it difficult because the food and weather are so different. But after a ..... he got used to it, and didn't want to come home.
4 A: Why can't the company pay for me to go to the conference?
B: Well, ... the boss doesn't seem to think it's very important, and ..... we're too busy at the moment to give anyone time off work.
5 A: Did the new company do well?
B: Yeah, ... it did very well. But then the manager left, and after a ..... they started losing money. ....., they had to close down.

LIVEWORKSHEETS