# Writing Centre

# TRANSITION WORDS & PHRASES

**\*Note:** Most of the following words and phrases are conjunctive adverbs. Coordinating conjunctions are marked (CC) and subordinating conjunctions are marked (SC). For useful rules about use and punctuation with these types of connectors, see the “Sentence Connectors & Transitions” handout!

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Agreement  Addition  Similarity  Add information, reinforce ideas, and express agreement with preceding material | and (CC)  in the first place  not only… but also (CC)  as a matter of fact  in like manner  in addition  coupled with  in the same way  in light of  not to mention | again  also  then  equally  identically  uniquely  like  as  too  equally important | moreover  as well as  together with  of course  likewise  comparatively  correspondingly  similarly  furthermore  additionally |
| Condition  Cause  Purpose  Present specific conditions or intentions | for (CC)  if (SC)  in the event that (SC)  in case (SC)  even if (SC)  whenever (SC)  when (SC)  as (SC)  due to + noun (SC)  since (SC)  because (SC) | because of + noun (SC)  so/as long as (SC)  in the hope that (SC)  to the end that (SC)  in order to (SC)  in view of + noun (SC)  unless (SC) | provided that (SC)  given that (SC)  so that (SC)  so as to + verb (SC)  for the purpose of + noun  with this intention |
| Effect  Consequence  Result  Present a result that follows from a previous cause or condition | so (CC)  as a result  under those circumstances  in that case | thus  then  hence  for this reason | consequently  therefore  accordingly  henceforth\*  forthwith\* |
| Conclusion  Summary  Restatement  Conclude, summarize and/or restate ideas, or a indicate a final general statement  \*these words are *time* words indicating a result from now on | as can be seen  generally speaking  in the final analysis  all things considered  as shown above  in the long run  given these points  as has been noted  in a word | after all  in fact  in summary  in conclusion  in short  in brief  in essence  to summarize  for the most part | by and large  to sum up  on the whole  in any event  in either case  all in all  on balance  altogether  overall |
| Space  Location  Place  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  to the left/right  in front of + noun  on this side  in the distance  here and there  in the background  in the center of + noun  adjacent to + noun  opposite to + noun | there  next  where (SC)  from + noun  over + noun  near + noun  above + noun  below + noun  down  under + noun | beyond + noun  nearby  wherever (SC)  around + noun  between N + N  before + noun  alongside + noun  beneath + noun  beside + noun  behind + noun |
| Time  Chronology  Sequence  Limit, restrict, and define time | when (SC)  once (SC)  as soon as (SC)  after (SC)  after + n.  before (SC)  before + n.  until (SC)  until + n.  during (SC)  during + n.  while (SC)  whenever (SC)  at the present time  from time to time  sooner or later  at the same time | later  last  since + n.  then  hence  about  next  formerly  suddenly  shortly  without delay  in the first place  all of a sudden  at this instant  immediately  finally  up to the present time | eventually  meanwhile  further  first… second  in time  prior to  forthwith  straightaway  instantly  presently  occasionally  in due time  until now  in the meantime  in a moment  to begin with |

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.

**Placing transition words**

There are three options for placing transition words:

1. The beginning of a sentence

* This emphasizes the relationship between the ideas, by making the transition word the focus for the reader.

1. The middle of a sentence (after a particular word or idea)

* Emphasizes the preceding idea or word
* Useful when introducing an idea for the first time

1. The end of a sentence

* De-emphasizes the relationship and emphasizes the preceding idea.
* Least common placement for transition words; use carefully.

**Punctuation**

Transition words are used with a special rule for punctuation: a semicolon or a period is used after the first sentence or clause, and a comma is almost always used to set off the transition word from the second sentence or clause.

**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.

Adapted from:

[sass.uottawa.ca](http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/writing/kit/grammar-transitional.pdf)

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