# 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!

|   |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| AgreementAdditionSimilarityAdd information, reinforce ideas, and express agreement with preceding material | and (CC)in the first placenot only… but also (CC)as a matter of factin like mannerin additioncoupled within the same wayin light ofnot to mention  | againalsothenequallyidenticallyuniquelylikeastoo equally important | moreoveras well astogether withof courselikewisecomparativelycorrespondinglysimilarlyfurthermoreadditionally |
| Condition Cause PurposePresent 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 + nounwith this intention |
| EffectConsequence ResultPresent a result that follows from a previous cause or condition | so (CC)as a resultunder those circumstancesin that case | thusthenhence for this reason | consequentlythereforeaccordinglyhenceforth\*forthwith\* |
| ConclusionSummaryRestatementConclude, 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 seengenerally speakingin the final analysisall things consideredas shown abovein the long rungiven these pointsas has been notedin a word | after allin factin summaryin conclusionin shortin briefin essenceto summarizefor the most part | by and largeto sum upon the wholein any eventin either caseall in allon balancealtogetheroverall |
| SpaceLocationPlace 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 middleto the left/rightin front of + nounon this sidein the distancehere and therein the backgroundin the center of + nounadjacent to + nounopposite to + noun | therenextwhere (SC)from + nounover + nounnear + nounabove + nounbelow + noundownunder + noun | beyond + nounnearbywherever (SC)around + nounbetween N + Nbefore + nounalongside + nounbeneath + nounbeside + nounbehind + noun |
| Time Chronology SequenceLimit, 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 timefrom time to timesooner or laterat the same time | laterlastsince + n. then henceabout nextformerlysuddenlyshortlywithout delayin the first placeall of a suddenat this instantimmediatelyfinally up to the present time | eventuallymeanwhilefurtherfirst… secondin timeprior toforthwithstraightawayinstantlypresentlyoccasionally in due timeuntil nowin the meantimein a momentto 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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