

Academic Writing

Transition Words

Transition words create flow between the ideas presented in a paper. They can connect similar facts, contrast opposing arguments, explain a cause and effect relationship, help to illustrate a point, identify a sequence of events, and/or lead the reader to a conclusion.

TYPES AND USES:

- **Causation**-use these transition words to show the cause and effect relationship between ideas:
so, therefore, because, for, as a result, accordingly, because of this, hence, consequently, thus, due to, for this reason.

Example: The article suggests that enrolment in post-secondary institutions has decreased **as a result** of the rise in tuition.

- **Conclusion**-use these transition words to bring your ideas together at the end of a paragraph or to summarize at the end of your paper:
all in all, in conclusion, in short, and so, thus, on the whole, therefore, so, in brief, to summarize.

Example: **In conclusion**, students who work or volunteer on campus spend more time with faculty, staff, and other students and **therefore** they tend to feel a greater connection to the university community.

- **Contrast**-use these transition words to contrast a previously mentioned point:
or, on the other hand, yet, still, but, however, instead, nonetheless, on the contrary, conversely, notwithstanding, nevertheless, or, another possibility, neither...nor..., though, although, whereas, in contrast.

Example: Interesting ideas make a paper exciting to read. **However**, grammar mistakes can make these ideas unclear to the reader.

- **Coordination**-use these transition words to add to a previous point:

and, also, as well, at the same time, in the same way, not only... but also, furthermore, moreover, likewise, similarly, equally important too, additionally, in addition.

Example: Staying physically active while attending university is **not only** beneficial from a health standpoint, **but also** increases overall motivation.

- **Inclusion**-use these words to introduce examples, illustrations, or in-depth explanations into your paper:

for example, for instance, such as, like, in particular, specifically, to illustrate, to demonstrate, this is, namely, in other words, in fact, indeed, frequently, occasionally, in general.

Example: There are many on-campus resources to improve writing and learning strategies. **For example**, the Student Learning Commons in the Library holds workshops on topics **such as** grammar, clear and concise writing, and critical thinking.

- **Sequence**-use these transition words to indicate a point in time or a progression of ideas:

then, next, finally, afterwards, eventually, later, meanwhile, soon, presently, immediately, since, formerly, previously, last, at last, at length, subsequently, in the meantime, simultaneously, first, second.

Example: **First**, I will explain the importance of learning in a university environment, and **then**, I will relate this information to a successful career.

Note: these lists are not exhaustive; add your own 'favourite' transition words!

Further Resources:

Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2006). *Writing Academic English*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Longman.

Swan, M. (2005). *Practical English Usage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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