

Conjunctions in English Grammar: Types, Memory Tips, Rules with Practice Problems

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Conjunction is a topic of importance for solving many types of questions in General English Paper in Government exams like IBPS, PO, CLERK, SO, SSC, CDS, RRB and Defence Exams. Many direct and indirect questions can be expected from this topic. It is frequently asked in the General English section in the form of Error Spotting, Reading Comprehensions, Fillers etc.

Understanding Conjunctions not only helps you clear the General English section but also enables you to write effectively. Many students end up writing big sentences without proper use of Conjunctions which results in less score. To avoid such mistakes, read through the below guide English (Grammar) on Conjunction & Its Types carefully.

Check out [Word Swapping](#) here.

What is a Conjunction?

Conjunctions are the words that glue the words with words. They can be used to join Subject with Subjects, Part of Sentence with parts of Sentences, Sentences with Sentences and clauses together. They assist in conjoining the speech or parts of a language.

Examples of Conjunction:

1. Jessica **and** James are twins
2. She worked hard **yet** she failed.
3. I went to play, **although** it was hot outside.

In the first sentence, Conjunctions is used to join two nouns/ words. In the second sentence, Conjunction is used to join two sentences. In the third sentence, Conjunction is used to join two clauses. Conjunctions can be a single word (and), a group of words (as long as) or correlative words (Not only... but also)

Example:

1. I want to buy a book **and** a pen.
2. She will play **as long as** she can.
3. **Not only** will it spoil your health **but also** make you lose money.

Do check out [Noun](#) here.

Why Use Coniunction?

- To avoid choppy sentences.
- To avoid redundancy or repetition.
- For better elaboration and understanding of Language.
- The conjunctions also elucidate the knowledge of Idiomatic phrases as some of them are used as 'As well as', 'provided that'.
- To help in different competitive examinations like SSC, banking and other.
- To help in Reading comprehensions and Cloze tests.
- To help in relating one idea with another.

How To Use A Conjunction In A Sentence?

- Subject1+Conjunction+Subject2+Verb+Object
- Subject1+verb+Object+Conjunction+Subject2+verb+object

Examples of how to use a conjunction in a sentence.

- John and Mary are known for their hard work.
- John is known for his hard work but Mary is known for her procrastination.

Check out [Direct Indirect Speech](#) here.

Building Blocks of Conjunction:

Additives

- Adds: And, also, as well, either...or, neither...nor, as well, or, else.
- Introduces: For instance, to illustrate, in particular.
- Reference: Speaking about, considering, regarding, the fact that.
- Similarity: In the same way, equally, likewise, in a like manner.
- Identification: Namely, specifically.
- Clarify/Elaboration: that is to say, to put it in this way, in another way, in other words.

Adversative

- Signal Contrast: But, by the way, while, on the other hand, in contrast to, still.
- Emphasis: even more, above all, indeed, besides.
- Concession: But even so, above all, indeed, however, nevertheless, however.
- Dismissal: either way, in either way, whichever happens, even supposing.
- Replacement/correction: or at least, rather, instead.

Casual

- Cause/Reason: in the view of, as, since, for, for the reason that, because of, as.
- Condition: on the condition, provided that, if, provided that, unless.
- Effect/Reason: henceforth, thus, in the result of, as a consequence.
- Purpose: for the purpose of, in the hope of that, so that, in order that.
- Consequence: under the circumstance of, if not, that being the case.
- Respective: in respect to, otherwise, apart from that, in other respects.

Sequential- logical or chronological sequence

- Ordinal: first, firstly, to begin with, to start with, to commence with.
- Continuation: then, next, in support of, moreover, furthermore, subsequently.
- Resumption: to get back to the point, to resume, anyhow, anyway.
- Conclusion: to conclude, as a final point, eventually, at last, in the end, finally.
- Digression: to change the top, by the way, incidentally.
- Summation: to summarize, altogether, to put it in brief.

Do check out [Verb](#) here

Conjunctions VS. Connectors

Candidates often get confused between Conjunctions and Connectors. Here is a clear distinction between them.

Things to consider while knowing the difference between Conjunctions and Connectors.

Definition	Usage	Examples
Conjunctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to conjoin a sentence or a part of a sentence. • Conjunctions rely on the knowledge the reader already knows. • Conjunctions imply or carry forward the same idea. • They do not begin any new ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She does not like parties but she loves enjoys. • She failed because she did not study. • They love to read and write together although they have a different set of ideas. • Sam as well as his parents planned for a vacation to the Bahamas.
Connectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used for proceeding with the statement, not for the assumed knowledge of readers • Connectors are used for the separation of ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, the staff was rude to her, she has always loved to go to the same place. • Eventually, this too shall pass

Few examples to consider!

- Connector: Cars are expensive, moreover, they pollute the environment.

- Conjunctions: Cars are expensive and they pollute the environment.

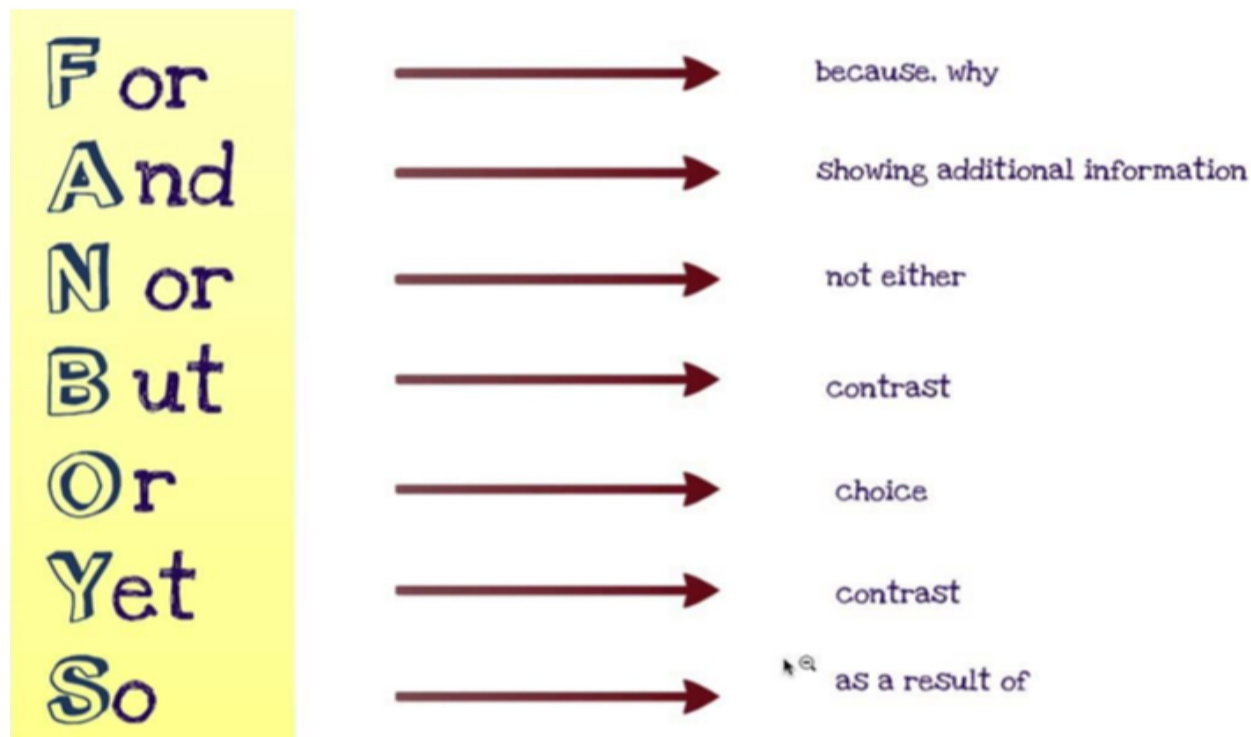
What are the Types of Conjunctions?

Depending upon the jobs they perform in a sentence, Conjunctions are classified as

Coordinating conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions are words that conjoin sentences with sentences, phrases with phrases, clauses with clauses, subjects with subjects. The examples of correlative conjunctions are: For, and, nor, but, or, yet, so.

Remember the Co-ordinating Conjunctions with an acronym



Exception: 'But'

and 'Yet', both are additive conjunctions, often confused with each other. But both have different functions to perform. 'But' allows the statement to proceed and supports. 'Yet' injects a degree of 'contradiction'.

Get some practice on [Fillers](#) too.

Examples of Coordinating Conjunctions:

- This batch of mushroom stew is savoury and delicious.
- We should hate to waste a drop of water, for it is expensive and valuable these days.
- I will stay outdoors with friends or go home for a while.

Comma Rules

- Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction joining independent phrases.
 - The seven coordinating conjunctions are: and, but, or, nor, for, so and yet.
- Commas tell the reader that one independent clause has ended and another is beginning.
 - Ex: Nearly everyone has heard of the power of positive thinking, but I actually practice it in my day to day life.

Exception: Commas should not be used after coordinating conjunctions to open the sentence unless an interrupter immediately follows.

Memory Tip

Ensure that coordinating conjunction is immediately followed by the main clause. Do not begin a sentence with coordinating conjunction. **Example:**

1. Incorrect: But I don't like tea, I like coffee.
2. Correct: I don't like tea, but I like coffee.

Learn all about [Adverbs](#) here.

Subordinating Conjunctions:

Subordinating conjunctions allow and introduce a subordinating or dependent clause. They glue an independent clause with a dependent clause. Out of all the conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions are the most tricky to follow and identify.

Note:

- 'Independent clause' is a clause that does not need any other clause to complete the sentence. They are independent on their own. 'She did not study' is an independent clause.
- 'Dependent clause' is a clause that needs a clause or a sentence to support its completion. 'Because she did not study' is a dependent clause.

Few examples of Subordinating conjunctions are: Although, though, however, as, as long as, once, since, when, while, if, where.

Check out [Subject Verb Agreement](#) here.

Structure For Subordinating Conjunctions To Use In A Sentence

1. Independent clause + Subordinating clause + Dependent clause
2. Conjunction + Dependent clause + Independent clause

Exception: ‘Subordinating conjunctions’ and ‘Relative pronouns’ are often confused with. Subordinating conjunctions do not act as the subject of a dependent clause, relative pronouns do.

To explain this, ‘John is the boy who came last night to the party’ John is the boy is an independent clause Who came last night to the party is a dependent clause ‘who’ relates, hence, is a relative pronoun. We talked about the movies and drama while we ate. ‘We talked about the movies and drama’ is an independent clause. ‘While we ate’ is an additive to the sentence. ‘while’ supports or ‘adds’, hence, subordinating conjunction. It is believed that ‘Because’ never begins a sentence. ‘Because’ is a ‘subordinating sentence’ and begins a sentence.

Common Mistake: ‘Therefore’ is not a connector. It is mistaken as a conjunction.

To get details on [Common Rules for Spellings](#), candidates can visit the linked article.

Correlative Conjunctions:

Name them as ‘Tag-team’ conjunctions or ‘Split conjunctions’, the work they do is the same! They get their names from the fact that they work together. They split themselves in a sentence and conjoin themselves with different parts of a sentence to make them relative. Examples of Correlative Conjunction

- Either...or: expresses a choice between two subjects/objects.

Example: Either he or she works meticulously.

- Neither...nor: expresses a negation between choice/choices.

Example: Neither he nor she works meticulously.

- No sooner ...than: One thing happened immediately another.

Example: No sooner did she arrive home than he came.

- Scarcely/Hardly/Rarely/Barely...when/before: The same idea expressed further.

Example: Scarcely had I come home when my parents reached.

- Whether...or: When two alternatives are possible.

Example: Whether my parents or Sally’s parents will go on a vacation.

- Not only...but also: Considering both the options.

Example: Not only John but also Mary has decided to be determined about it.

CORRELATIVE CONJUNCTIONS

either . . . or

both . . . and

neither . . . nor

not only . . . but also

Faulty: Clara *not only* wants money *but also* fame.

Correct: Clara wants *not only* money *but also* fame.

Correct: Clara *not only* wants money *but also* wants fame.

Structure of Correlative

conjunctions

- Subject+ Not only+ verb +but also+ verb+ object
- Subject+ either + verb+ or+ verb+ object
- Either+ subject+ Or+ subject + verb + object
- No sooner did+..... + than+.....
- Hardly/Scarcely had+.....when+.....

Here's all you need to know about [Gerund, Infinitive and Participle](#)

Memory Tip

When using 'Not only...but also', sentence parallelism of construction should be kept in mind. Example

- (Incorrect) He is not only intelligent but he also has a great sense of humour.
- (Correct) He is not only intelligent but also humorous.

(The sentence parallelism construction on the basis of Tenses) To identify correlative conjunction, look for the split in a sentence.

Note: ‘Compound conjunctions’ are called compounds as they are made of the assimilation of two or more conjunctions. The examples of Compound conjunctions in English grammar are: ‘as much as’, ‘as soon as’, ‘As well as’.

Adverbial Conjunction

- A conjunct, transitional conjunction, cohesive conjunction, whatever it may be. They are also known as these.
- The basic function of adverbial conjunctions is to provide a relation between two sequential statements.

Adverbial conjunction	Examples
Accordingly	She does what is told to accordingly.
Again	They again visited their grandparent’s home.
Also	Sally works and studies also.
Anyway	How are you, anyway?
Anyhow	We all have to do what we are told, anyhow!
Certainly	We certainly are planning to enjoy after work.
Besides	What does she do besides studying?
Consequently	Consequently, it is humanity that we all are.
Moreover	Moreover, it is a Saturday!

For details on the [Synonyms & Antonyms](#), refer to the linked article.

ADVERBIAL CONJUNCTIONS



- Whereas
- Accordingly
- Therefore
- Also
- Besides
- Consequently
- Finally
- Thus
- However
- Instead
- Indeed
- Furthermore
- Later
- Moreover
- Nevertheless
- Otherwise
- Still
- So
- As a matter of fact
- On the other hand
- Likewise
- Nonetheless
- Similarly
- For example
- Certainly
- At the same time
- In the first place

Points To Remember While Using Conjunctions

- Conjunctions are cohesive devices.
- Conjunctions are 3 in usage, and 5 on the basis of semantic structure.
- Correlative conjunctions are always used and identified in pairs.
- Compound conjunctions are made of the assimilation of two or more conjunctions.
- Coordinating conjunctions can be recognized as 'F.A.N.B.O.YS.'
- Correlative conjunctions to be used with the same part of speech.
- Conjunctions are used as Additives, Adversatives, Casual, and Sequential.
- Conjunctions and Connectors are two different concepts to study.
- Adverbial conjunctions relate to two or more sequential statements.

Check out [Subject Verb Agreement](#) here.

Rules While Using Conjunction

Rule #1: Rule of Comma

- Always use a comma before the coordinating conjunctions when it is used to connect two independent clauses.

Example: Tom walked his dog, and he grabbed the mail.

- When using a coordinating conjunction to connect two items, do not use a comma.

Example: Tom walked his dog and grabbed the main.

- When using a coordinating conjunction to list the items, the usage of a comma before coordinating conjunction is optional.

Example: She can cook potatoes, tomatoes, and carrots. She can cook potatoes, tomatoes and carrots.

Rule #2: The conjunction ‘**Both**’ is followed by ‘**And**’.

Example: Both eggs **and** ham are a staple food of western culture.

Rule #3: Usage of ‘LEST’ Lest is used when in a sentence a speaker thinks to avoid something.

Example: Don’t push people too hard lest you hurt relationships.

Rule #4: Usage of ‘**so..as**’ ‘So..as’ as a conjunction is used to show similarity between two objects, people, or subjects. This combination is used in negative sentences only.

Example: She is not so intelligent as her sister is.

Rule #5: Usage of ‘**as..as**’ ‘as..as’ as a conjunction is used to show the similarity between two objects, people, or subjects. Unlike “so...as” this combination can be used in both positive and negatives sentences

Example: She is as intelligent as her sister is. She is not as intelligent as her sister is.

Rule #6: That ‘Lest’ should follow ‘should’ or ‘first form of the verb’

Example: Walk carefully lest he may fall.

Rule #7: Unless and Until – Unless it is action oriented. Until is time oriented.

Example: She will not succeed unless she works hard for it. She will not be able to leave home until they return.

Rule #8: If/Whether In a sentence, to mention doubt or confusion, the statement is joined by if or whether.

For details on the [Para Jumbles](#), refer to the linked article.

Example: I am doubtful whether he will come back. I am not sure if he will come back.

Rule #9: That In a sentence, to mention surety, the statement is joined by “That”

Example: I am sure that he will come back. I know that he will not pass this exam.

Rule #10: Usage of ‘**Not only..but also**’, ‘**no sooner...then**’, ‘**Hardly..when**’ These correlative conjunctions to be followed in their definite pairs only.

Example: Not only she but also he planned for a movie. No sooner did she arrive than they came back. ‘ Hardly had I completed my lesson when my friends came.

Rule #11: After rather/other, than follows After the usage of Rather and Other, than always follow in a sentence.

Example: I would rather die than beg.

Rule #12: ‘Seldom or never’/‘Seldom if ever’ instead ‘seldom or ever’/ ‘seldom if never’ ‘Seldom or never’ and ‘Seldom if ever’ are definite constructions. Using ‘Seldom or ever’ or ‘seldom if never’ is an incorrect usage.

Example: The national networks seldom or never telecast good programs.

Rule #13: Between.....and Often mistaken with the preposition “to”

Example: This train runs between Delhi and Mumbai.

Rule #14: What with.....and This combination is used to introduce the part of a sentence that indicates the cause of something

Example: What with school **and** sports, she’s always busy.

Rule #15: Although/Though.....yet/, Used to mention contraction

Example: Though Rahul Gandhi is opulent **yet** is unpopular among youths.

Rule #16: Such.....that

Example: The teacher looked at the boy in **such** anger **that** he began to cry.

Want to know about [Phrasal Verbs](#)? Learn here.

Practice Problems

Spot the error in the given context.

Q1. Have you decided to go to the States or remain in India?

Solution: A question is being asked about a choice, so the correct correlative conjunction is- ‘whether....or’. *The correct sentence is*–Have you decided whether to go to the States or remain in India?

Q2: As if he talks he is a well-educated man.

Solution: The subordinating conjunction ‘as if’ means ‘as though’ and is usually written as –subject + were+ complement. The 2 clauses–‘ he talks ‘ + ‘he is a well-educated man’. The first clause connects to the second with ‘as if’, since the 2nd clause is the reasoning of the first clause. The correct sentence is – He talks as if he is a well-educated man.

To get details on [Types, Rules & Cases of Sentence Correction](#), candidates can visit the linked article.

Q3: Because he was teaching, he was also learning.

Solution: ‘Because’ is a subordinating conjunction, used to mean-‘for the reason that’; ‘since’. The given sentence is talking about ‘time’ as 2 actions were going on simultaneously. So the correct conjunction would be – ‘while’. The correct sentence is – While he was teaching, he was also learning.

Q4: She ran as fast as she could she was late for school lest.

Solution: Lest is subordinating conjunction used for negatives to mean– in order that.....not’ Lest means ‘for fear that’; ‘in case’. So the correct way of writing the given sentence is–She ran as fast as she could lest she was late for school.

Q5: He is both sweet-natured but intelligent.

Solution: The conjunction ‘both’ is always followed by ‘and’ as it connects 2 words of the same level. In the given sentence ‘but’ is incorrectly used. ‘But is normally used to show contrast. In the given sentence it should be–He is both sweet-natured and intelligent.

For details on the [Cloze Test](#), refer to the linked article.

Q6: Wherever it was early in the morning, I went for a walk.

Solution: ‘Wherever’ is a subordinating conjunction. A subordinating conjunction joins a simple sentence to an incomplete clause which depends on it to make complete sense. Some other subordinating conjunctions are– because, before, after, when since etc. The main clause is –‘I went for a walk’ and the subordinating clause is ‘it was early morning’ they are joined by ‘wherever’. The conjunction does not fit the context [as it can mean– in any place there was early morning]. The conjunction that will be right here is– ‘as’ / ‘because’ / ‘since’. The correct sentence can be written as –

1. Since it was early in the morning, I went for a walk.
2. Because it was early in the morning, I went for a walk.
3. As it was early in the morning, I went for a walk.

Q7: We went to meet him so he wasn’t at home.

Solution: The conjunction ‘so’ is a coordinating conjunction. F-A-N-B-O-Y-S [for-and-nor-but-or-yet-so] Coordinating conjunctions join the clauses of the same rank. i.e. a simple sentence to a simple sentence. The given sentence has 2 simple sentences joined by the conjunction ‘so’.[which is used to show cause, result] However, according to the context of the sentence, it should be ‘but’ as the first part talks about going to meet and the second part about him not being present. As both are contrasting, the correct conjunction will be ‘but’. The correct sentence is–We went to meet him but he wasn’t at home.

Q8: Unless you do not register your car it will have to be scrapped.

Solution: ‘Unless’ means ‘if not’– since it is negative, adding another negative ‘not’ is grammatically incorrect. The given sentence has– ‘unless...not’ The given sentence can be written correctly in two ways: 1–Unless you register your car it will have to be scrapped. 2- If you do not register your car it will have to be scrapped.

To get details on [Idioms and Phrases](#), candidates can visit the linked article.

Q9: She wanted to either eat a hamburger or a subway sandwich.

Solution: ‘Either...or is a correlative conjunction. [I.e. a pair of joining words that connects 2 words, phrases or clauses—either..Or/ neither...nor etc.]. When joining 2 clauses/ nouns with correlative conjunction it needs to be written immediately before the word it relates to. In the given sentence the conjunction relates to 2 nouns -‘hamburger’ and ‘subway sandwich’. So the conjunction should be placed immediately before these nouns. [either+noun..or+ noun] The correct sentence is—She wanted to eat either a hamburger or a subway sandwich.

Q. Fill in the blanks with the suitable option given:

1. The air quality in the capital had shown signs of improvement on Monday as it moved from ‘very poor’ to ‘poor’ category, _____ experts said it could deteriorate in the coming days due to toxic air coming out of the blazing fire at Bhalswa landfill site.

Ans: But Explanation: The given blank needs a coordinating conjunction to join the two independent clauses – ‘the air quality... category’ and ‘experts site’. Hence ‘because’ is negated as it joins the dependent clause to the independent clause. ‘And’ is used when both clauses are not in contrast while ‘or’ is used to refer to when two clauses try to gain more importance.

The given sentence has two independent clauses that are equal in importance but contrast with each other so the correct conjunction to join them is ‘but’.

2. India is the second most populous country _____ the seventh largest country by area in the world.

Ans: And Explanation: While, how, but are used for expressing comparison or contradiction. But the sentence is about the continuation or expression of two different facts regarding India one after the other. So “and” should be used here.

For details on the [Types and Rules of Tenses](#), refer to the linked article.

3. You can’t pass the IELTS exam _____ you study hard for it, as it is a tough exam to pass.

Ans: Unless Explanation: A condition is shown here and hence requires an adverb that will show a contrast.

4. More than thirty years have now passed _____ I took my first flight.

Ans: Since Explanation: ‘Since’ in this context has been used as a replacement for ‘because’. Hence, ‘since’ is the appropriate option here.

Hope this article on English (Grammar) was a fun learning session for you. Remember the Types of Conjunction with examples. Now you can learn and practice for all types of competitive apps through our free [Testbook App](#). Download now!

Conjunctions in English Grammar FAQs

Q 1 What is a Conjunction?

Q.1 What is a Conjunction?

Ans.1 Conjunctions are the words that join the words, clauses, and sentences.

Q.2 Why are Conjunctions important?

Ans.2 Conjunctions make sentences more effective to say or write and easy to understand.

Q.3 What are the different types of Conjunction?

Ans.3 The different types of Conjunctions are coordinate, subordinate and correlative conjunctions

Q.4 Which are the coordinating conjunctions?

Ans.4 For, And, Neither, But, Or, Yet, So are coordinating conjunctions.

Q.5 What is a Structure of Conjunction in a sentence?

Ans.5 Subject₁+Conjunction+Subject₂+Verb+Object Subject₁+verb+Object+Conjunction+Subject₂+verb+object