

Transition Words & Phrases

Reference

Transition words and phrases are used to connect ideas in formal writing and speaking.

Addition

- in addition
- moreover
- furthermore
- additionally
- as well
- also

Contradiction

- however
- on the other hand
- on the contrary
- conversely
- nevertheless
- unlike

Comparison

- similarly
- in comparison
- comparatively
- at the same time
- likewise
- like

Order & Sequence

- first / first of all
- next
- then
- finally
- previously
- meanwhile

Example

- for example
- for instance
- such as
- like

Cause & Effect

- therefore
- as a result
- consequently
- thus

Clarification

- in other words
- that is
- as mentioned
- again

Conclusion

- in conclusion
- in summary
- in brief
- overall

Sentence Positions

Most transition words and phrases can appear in three places in a sentence. They can also be placed between two sentences. Note the typical punctuation associated with each position.

Position	Examples
at the beginning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hurricanes claim many lives each year. Moreover, these powerful storms cause millions of dollars in damage. • Initial research seemed to support the theory. However, the latest test results weren't conclusive. • Anxiety disorders can manifest in physical symptoms. For example, a patient may become dizzy or have trouble breathing.
in the middle (usually after the subject)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hurricanes claim many lives each year. These powerful storms, moreover, cause millions of dollars in damage. • Initial research seemed to support the theory. The latest test results, however, weren't conclusive. • Anxiety disorders can manifest in physical symptoms. A patient, for example, may become dizzy or have trouble breathing.
at the end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hurricanes claim many lives each year. These powerful storms cause millions of dollars in damage, moreover. • Initial research seemed to support the theory. The latest test results weren't conclusive, however. • Anxiety disorders can manifest in physical symptoms. A patient may become dizzy or have trouble breathing, for example.
between two sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hurricanes claim many lives each year; moreover, these powerful storms cause millions of dollars in damage. • Initial research seemed to support the theory; however, the latest test results weren't conclusive. • Anxiety disorders can manifest in physical symptoms; for example, a patient may become dizzy or have trouble breathing.

Exceptions

Some transition words don't follow the normal rules for sentence position.

Exception #1

Such as almost always appears after a noun (not at the beginning or end of a sentence).

- There are many ways to improve one's quality of sleep, **such as** no TV before bed and no food after 8:00 pm.

Exception #2

Also can appear at the beginning or end of a sentence. At the end, it is not preceded by a comma.

As well should only come at the end of a sentence with no preceding comma.

- New employees are expected to start at 9:00 am sharp. **Also**, they must dress professionally at all times.
- New employees are expected to start at 9:00 am sharp. They must dress professionally at all times **also**.
- New employees are expected to start at 9:00 am sharp. They must dress professionally at all times **as well**.

Exception #3

Thus, again, likewise, like, and unlike usually only appear at the beginning of a sentence.

- There was no conclusive evidence. **Thus**, the scientists decided to begin testing all over again.
- This essay has demonstrated the relationship between vitamins and good health. **Again**, taking vitamin supplements ensures the body receives proper nutrients.
- Dogs make great pets. **Likewise**, cats are wonderful companions.
- **Like** cats, dogs make great pets.
- **Unlike** snakes, dogs make great pets.

Exception #4

Meanwhile can appear at the beginning of a sentence or after a subject.

- Hiring had begun. **Meanwhile**, interviews were still taking place.
- Hiring had begun. Interviews, **meanwhile**, were still taking place.