Conjunctions

Table of Contents

2 **Grammar Notes**
Conjunctions: Three Types

8 **Exercise 1**
Coordinating Conjunctions: Multiple-Choice

9 **Exercise 2**
Coordinating Conjunctions: Fill in the Blanks 1

10 **Exercise 3**
Coordinating Conjunctions: Fill in the Blanks 2

10 **Exercise 4**
Coordinating Conjunctions: Speaking

11 **Exercise 5**
Correlative Conjunctions: Fill in the Blanks 3

12 **Exercise 6**
Correlative Conjunctions: Pair Work

14 **Exercise 7**
Subordinating Conjunctions: Matchup

15 **Exercise 8**
Subordinating Conjunctions:
Complete the Sentences

16 **Exercise 9**
Mixed Conjunctions: Connect the Clauses

18 **Exercise 10**
Mixed Conjunctions: Writing

19 **Exercise 11**
Mixed Conjunctions: Quiz

20 **Grammar Assessment**

21 **Self-Assessment**

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Grammar Notes

CONJUNCTIONS: THREE TYPES

A. Coordinating Conjunctions

FORM

Coordinating conjunctions are very common in English.
These conjunctions **join** two or more parts of speech (e.g., N + N), phrases (e.g., VO + VO), or clauses (e.g., SVO + SVO).

PURPOSE

Coordinating conjunctions are used in speaking and writing to add more detail. They can introduce a similar idea (*and*), opposite idea (*but*, *yet*), choice (*or*, *nor*), result (*so*), or reason (*for*).

Memory Trick

Use the word "FANBOYS" to make it easy to remember the seven coordinating conjunctions!

- F = for
- A = and
- N = nor
- B = but
- O = or
- Y = yet
- S = so

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Grammar Notes cont.

A. Coordinating Conjunctions cont.

Coordinating Conjunction	Purpose	Notes	Example
and	addition	very common	She likes ham **and** pineapple on her pizza.
but	opposition	very common	He studies hard, **but** his brother doesn't care about school.
or	choice	very common	Will you wear the green jacket **or** the blue one?
	addition	common in negative sentences*	My sister doesn't like salt **or** pepper.
so	result	very common	I didn't finish my homework, **so** I'm not allowed to watch TV.
yet	opposition	not very common / more formal	Several reporters attended the press conference, **yet** no one asked any questions.
nor	choice	not very common / more formal / used in negative sentences	You didn't file the report, **nor** did you attend the meeting.
for	reason	not common at all / more poetic	The sky is dark, **for** the sun has set.

Punctuation Note:

What are the punctuation rules for coordinating conjunctions?

Don't use a comma when the conjunction separates two parts of speech or two phrases.

Use a comma when the conjunction separates two independent clauses (SVO + SVO). Note that some writers choose to drop the comma when the clauses are short or when the clauses have the same subject. When in doubt, use the comma!

- I like *pizza* **and** *hamburgers*. (N + N)
- Their house is *big* **and** *red*. (Adj + Adj)
- She usually *goes to the gym* **and** *runs on the treadmill* after class. (VO + VO)
- *I like him*(,) **and** *he likes me*. (SVO + SVO)
- *Many people showed up late to the party*, **and** *we didn't have enough food for everyone*. (SVO + SVO)

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Grammar Notes cont.

A. Coordinating Conjunctions cont.

*Usage Note #1

Be careful! When joining two parts of speech or two phrases in negative sentences, the rule is to use *or*, not *and*. When joining two clauses (SVO + SVO), the normal rule with *and* applies.

- ✔ I like apples **and** oranges.
  (correct, meaning "I like apples and I like oranges.")
- ✖ I **don't** like apples **and** oranges.
  (incorrect)
- ✔ I **don't** like apples **or** oranges.
  (correct, meaning "I don't like apples and I don't like oranges.")
- ✔ I **don't** like apples **and** I **don't** like oranges, either.
  (correct, meaning "I don't like apples and I don't like oranges.")

Usage Note #2

There is an old rule that says "Never begin a sentence with a conjunction." While most people think this rule is old-fashioned and that it's fine to begin a sentence with a conjunction, it is still frowned upon by some. In formal writing and speaking, it is best to avoid starting a sentence with a coordinating conjunction. But in casual writing and speaking, it is acceptable to do so.

- I tried to get home on time. **But** when I arrived, they had already left.
- He applied to that school many times. **And** it's a good thing he did!

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Grammar Notes cont.

B. Correlative Conjunctions

FORM

Some conjunctions are used in pairs. They use **parallel** structure, which means that the **same** grammatical forms appear on each side of the conjunction. Correlative conjunctions can join two parts of speech (e.g., N + N), phrases (e.g., VO + VO), or clauses (e.g., SVO + SVO).

PURPOSE

The first part of the correlative conjunction pair is mainly used for emphasis. The **emphasis** is on "more than one" (*both*, *not only*) or on the choice (*either*, *neither*, *whether*). In some cases (*both/and*, *either/or*), the first part of the pair can be dropped from the sentence without affecting the meaning.

✔ I enjoy **both** skiing **and** snowboarding.
✔ I enjoy skiing **and** snowboarding.

Correlative Conjunction	**Example**
both / and	**Both** *John* **and** *Bill* are excellent tennis players.
not only / but also	She **not only** *lost the game*, **but also** *hurt her ankle*.
either / or	**Either** *you register for the conference now* **or** *you lose out on this opportunity.*
neither / nor	**Neither** *the students* **nor** *the professor* understood the problem.
whether / or	**Whether** you *earn an* A **or** *get a lower grade*, make sure you try your best.

Punctuation Note:

There is usually no need for a comma to separate correlative conjunction pairs. If the pair separates longer phrases or clauses, it's possible to use a comma.

- **Not only** Kentaro **but also** Hideki finished the test on time even though they're new in the class.
- **Not only** do we need a new fridge, **but** we **also** want to replace our dishwasher and microwave.

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Grammar Notes cont.

C. Subordinating Conjunctions

FORM

A subordinating conjunction is a word or phrase at the beginning of a dependent clause (a sentence that cannot stand alone). Subordinating conjunctions join a **dependent clause** with an **independent clause** (a sentence that can stand alone).

PURPOSE

The purpose of subordinating conjunctions is to show **time** (*before*, *when*, *whenever*, *while*, etc.), **opposition** (*although*, *though*, *even though*, *whereas*, etc.), a **reason** (*because*, *as*, *since*, *so that*, etc.), or a **condition** (*if*, *even if*, *unless*, *whether or not*, etc.). A dependent clause that begins with a subordinating conjunction is known as an *adverb clause* or *subordinate clause*.

Subordinating Conjunction	Purpose	Example
after	time	**After** she graduated, she got a job as a lawyer.
although	opposition	I didn't wear a jacket **although** it was snowing.
because	reason	You failed the exam **because** you didn't study.
before	time	Don't forget to wash your hands **before** you eat.
even though	opposition	**Even though** they renovated their house, nobody wanted to buy it.
if	condition	**If** I have time, I will make cookies for the party.
since	reason	I couldn't ask him about the assignment **since** he never called me back.
unless	condition	**Unless** you know the answer, don't raise your hand in class.
until	time	We were texting each other **until** the exam started.
when	time	**When** you get to the park, meet me at the red bench.

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Grammar Notes cont.

C. Subordinating Conjunctions cont.

Punctuation Note:

The punctuation of a sentence with a subordinating conjunction depends on which clause comes first.

If the sentence begins with a dependent clause, it is usually followed by a comma. If an independent clause begins the sentence, it is almost never followed by a comma. Note that there is no difference in meaning in the examples below:

- **After** we left the theater**,** we went out for dinner.
- We went out for dinner **after** we left the theater.

D. Conjunction Review

How many conjunctions do you remember from the grammar notes? Get into pairs or groups and write down as many conjunctions as you can until your teacher says "Stop!"

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Exercise 1

COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS: MULTIPLE-CHOICE

Circle the best answer.

Ex. She doesn't play the guitar well, _____ she's a great singer.

a) and
(b) but
c) so

1. I could go to the movies _____ stay home.

a) but
b) and
c) or

2. She has a sore throat _____ a headache.

a) and
b) or
c) so

3. The bus broke down, _____ we all had to walk home.

a) or
b) but
c) so

4. I didn't get any lunch. There was enough food for everyone _____ me.

a) and
b) but
c) so

5. We bought some gardening tools _____ plants.

a) and
b) or
c) but

6. I had a map, _____ we got lost anyway.

a) so
b) but
c) or

7. Would you prefer coffee _____ tea?

a) but
b) and
c) or

8. The teacher asked us to remain seated _____ stay quiet.

a) and
b) but
c) so

9. I was really tired, _____ I didn't go to the gym.

a) but
b) so
c) or

10. She had three sweaters on, _____ she was still cold.

a) but
c) or
d) so

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Exercise 2

COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS: FILL IN THE BLANKS 1

Write *and*, *but*, or *or* in each blank.

Ex. I love going out to eat on weekends, _____*and*_____ I also enjoy going to the movies.

1. Would you like water _____ lemonade with your meal?
2. Ji Woo works in a restaurant on weekends _____ during the week.
3. Fatima has a great job, _____ she is a very unhappy person.
4. I will go to Montreal _____ Toronto for the weekend. I'm not sure which yet.
5. The sun was shining brightly, _____ the picnic was still canceled.
6. Sonja doesn't like jazz _____ the blues. She prefers hip-hop and rap.
7. I am not going to the game, _____ I will watch it on TV.
8. Yuka has six brothers _____ eleven cousins.
9. I do not like pasta, _____ I do like pizza.
10. Pierre doesn't feel like cooking _____ cleaning tonight.

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Exercise 3

COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS: FILL IN THE BLANKS 2

Write *so*, *yet*, or *nor* in each blank.

Ex. He doesn't like reading. _____*Nor*_____ does he like watching TV or playing video games.

1. The rain is very heavy, _____ the game will probably not be played.
2. Johann doesn't like chicken. _____ does he like pork or burgers.
3. Ena works hard, _____ she doesn't make a lot of money.
4. The sun is very strong, _____ Jacob still won't wear any sunscreen.
5. Our son really wants a new bicycle, _____ we will buy him one for his birthday.
6. The security lines are very long at the airport, _____ you should probably leave early for your flight.
7. Mateo does not come from Mexico. _____ is he from Belize. He is from Honduras.
8. Asha is an excellent violinist, _____ she will probably be chosen for the orchestra.
9. Bao is very tired, _____ he will still come with us to the movies.
10. Faiz loves San Francisco, _____ he is thinking of moving there.

Exercise 4

COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS: SPEAKING

Take turns making sentences with the conjunction provided and a clause (SVO).

Ex. It was raining, but we went to the beach anyway.

Student A:

- It was raining, but...
- I didn't like the menu choices, so...
- It was warm outside, so...
- I finished my homework, and...
- Do you want to come over, or...

Student B:

- It was sunny, so...
- I liked the menu choices, and...
- It was cold outside, but...
- I didn't finish my homework, but..
- Do you want to call me, or...

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Exercise 5

CORRELATIVE CONJUNCTIONS: FILL IN THE BLANKS 3

Insert one pair of correlative conjunctions in the blanks.
Use each pair only once.

Ex. Henrietta has _____*both*_____ an MA _____*and*_____ a PhD. That's incredible.

1. _____ the professors _____ the students like the new building. No one is happy because the rooms are too small.

2. _____ you stay late _____ leave right now, I want to thank you for your help.

3. Vicky is taking _____ biology _____ chemistry. I was surprised to hear she was taking both classes.

4. I will take a trip to _____ Bermuda _____ St. Thomas next winter. I haven't decided yet.

Correlative Conjunctions:

- ~~both / and~~
- not only / but also
- either / or
- neither / nor
- whether / or

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Exercise 6

CORRELATIVE CONJUNCTIONS: PAIR WORK

A. Speaking

With a partner, look at the charts and take turns making sentences about Omar and Pierre. Use *both / and*, *not only / but also*, *neither / nor*, and *either / or*.

Ex. Not only Omar but also Pierre likes watching sports on TV.*

Omar	Pierre
likes watching basketball on TV	likes watching hockey on TV
is really tall	is very tall
goes to college	goes to high school
doesn't have a girlfriend	isn't dating anyone
works out every day	goes to the gym after school
could travel or stay home this summer	might travel or stay home this summer
doesn't like junk food	doesn't like unhealthy food
might go out or stay in tonight	could go out or stay in tonight

*Did You Know?

When connecting subject nouns with *not only / but also*, *neither / nor*, or *either / or*, the verb agreement comes from the second noun in the pair. With *both / and*, the subject nouns are always followed by a plural verb.

- Not only my parents but also my sister **likes** horror movies.
- Not only my sister but also my parents **like** horror movies.
- Neither the crackers nor the cheese **tastes** good.
- Neither the cheese nor the crackers **taste** good.
- Either my dogs or my cat **makes** a mess every day.
- Either my cat or my dogs **make** a mess every day.
- Both ice cream and cookies **are** popular desserts.
- Both cookies and ice cream **are** popular desserts.

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Exercise 6 cont.

B. Writing

Using the information in Part A, write sentences using *both* / *and*, *not only* / *but also*, *neither* / *nor*, and *either* / *or*.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

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Exercise 7

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS: MATCHUP

Match up a beginning on the left with an ending on the right to form a complete sentence.

j	1. Since it was raining so hard,	a) until I fall asleep.
_____	2. Although Juan is a hard worker,	b) after I finish my homework.
_____	3. When Minori was driving to school yesterday,	c) she doesn't work on Sundays.
_____	4. She will get fired for stealing	d) just call me.
_____	5. Because Ai works for the government,	e) she saw an accident.
_____	6. I can't go to that expensive restaurant	f) his brother is lazy.
_____	7. If you need help,	g) he will go on a trip.
_____	8. I like to read in bed	h) unless you pay.
_____	9. Before Chung Hee starts his new job,	i) even though she is the boss's daughter.
_____	10. I will come over to your house	j) the game was canceled.

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Exercise 8

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS: COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

Write conclusions for the following sentences.

Ex. Even though I love junk food, *I avoid eating it most of the time.*

1. Although I don't like vegetables, _____
2. When Victoria sings, _____
3. Javier used to work in an office until _____
4. Before she got to school, _____
5. Maya always studies hard for her exams because_____
6. Even though they bought tickets, _____
7. I can't go out tonight unless _____
8. She didn't wake up early since _____
9. If you eat breakfast every day, _____
10. After Tanesha and Zola clean their apartment,_____

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Exercise 9

MIXED CONJUNCTIONS: CONNECT THE CLAUSES

Combine the two short sentences into one longer sentence.
Use the conjunction provided.

#	Conjunction	Sentence
Ex	but	My sister has many friends. She doesn't have a boyfriend. *My sister has many friends, but she doesn't have a boyfriend.*
1	when	I drove to work. I sang in my car. _____ _____
2	although	John is only eight years old. He can play the piano very well. _____ _____
3	not only / but also	Alma ate the chicken and rice. She ate two hamburgers. _____ _____
4	yet	Ned is the manager of the bank. He doesn't make a high salary. _____ _____
5	after	Gino ate breakfast. Then he washed the dishes. _____ _____



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Exercise 9 cont.

#	Conjunction	Sentence
6	and	Barbara arrived at home at eight. Then she called her sister. _____ _____
7	until	Bill worked late. He finished work at 9:00 pm. _____ _____
8	neither / nor	I won't invite Marie to my party. I won't invite Luc, either. _____ _____
9	even though	Hal studied a lot. He still got a very low grade. _____ _____
10	because	Everyone likes Hannah. She is patient and relaxed. _____ _____

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Exercise 10

MIXED CONJUNCTIONS: WRITING

Choose one of the topics in the box. Write about the topic using at least 10 conjunctions you learned in this lesson. Try to use all three different types of conjunctions (coordinating, correlative, subordinating).

Ex. *Last weekend, I made both eggs and pancakes for breakfast. After I ate them, I went to a friend's house. We watched a movie, but it wasn't very good...*

Topics

- what you did last weekend
- your future goals
- your family
- your friends
- your pet
- your favorite movie
- your own choice

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Exercise 11

MIXED CONJUNCTIONS: QUIZ

Circle the correct answer.

1. I want to marry Hee Jin, _____ she doesn't want to marry me.

   a) but
   b) and
   c) or

2. _____ Bian studied all night, she still got a C.

   a) If
   b) Unless
   c) Although

3. _____ I cleaned up the kitchen, I went for a walk.

   a) After
   b) If
   c) Until

4. Sofia has a house in Sicily _____ an apartment in Rome.

   a) so
   b) and
   c) or

5. I will love you _____ the world stops turning.

   a) even though
   b) until
   c) because

6. We need to decide on both the date _____ the location of the event.

   a) but
   b) or
   c) and

7. Carlo cannot go to the theater _____ you give him a ride.

   a) although
   b) since
   c) unless

8. You have worked very hard today, _____ you should take the day off tomorrow.

   a) so
   b) yet
   c) or

9. _____ you sign up now or later, you still have to bring a dish to share.

   a) Whether
   b) Either
   c) Both

10. The professor canceled the examination _____ so many of the students were sick.

    a) since
    b) if
    c) unless

11. Neither my family _____ my friends could help me solve the problem.

    a) or
    b) nor
    c) whether

12. Would you rather live in the country _____ the city?

    a) and
    b) yet
    c) or

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Grammar Assessment

Student / Group: _____

Date	Level	Assessed By	Target	Skill
			Conjunctions	Grammar

Criteria	Achieved 😀	Achieved with Help 🤔	Needs Improvement 😢
knows the difference in meaning of common coordinating conjunctions			
punctuates sentences with coordinating conjunctions correctly			
is able to connect parts of speech using correlative conjunctions			
understands how to use various subordinating conjunctions correctly			
is able to combine two short sentences into one longer sentence using a conjunction			

Notes

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Self-Assessment

CONJUNCTIONS

Add check marks (✔) to show what you've learned in this lesson.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Can I...	Yes (very well) 😀	Yes (with help) 🙂	Not yet 😕
use common coordinating conjunctions correctly in speaking?			
punctuate sentences with coordinating conjunctions correctly in writing?			
connect parts of speech using correlative conjunctions?			
use various subordinating conjunctions?			
combine two short sentences into one longer sentence using a conjunction?			

My Notes

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