Conjunctions
Lesson 16
What is a conjunction?

A conjunction is used to connect words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. Conjunctions are considered to be invariable grammar particle, and they may or may not stand between items they conjoin.

If you’d like your friends to bring pizza and soda, it’s pretty hard to do it without conjunctions. You could say: “Bring some pizza. Bring some soda.”

But it’s more efficient and easier to say: “Bring some pizza and soda.”

Here are more examples:

**words:**
- silver and gold

**phrases:**
- over the bridge and through the woods

**clauses:**
- The man planted a flower and watched it grow.
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More examples:

I like cooking. I like eating. I don’t like washing dishes afterward.
Sophie is clearly exhausted. She insists on dancing till dawn.

I like cooking and eating, but I don’t like washing dishes afterward.
Sophie is clearly exhausted, yet she insists on dancing till dawn.

Conjunctions allow you to form complex, elegant sentences and avoid the chopiness of multiple short sentences. Make sure that the phrases joined by conjunctions are parallel (share the same structure.

I work quickly and am careful.

I work quickly and carefully.
Types of Conjunctions

1. **Coordinating conjunctions** coordinate or join two or more sentences, main clauses, words, or other parts of speech which are of the same syntactic importance. Also known as coordinators, coordinating conjunctions are used to give equal emphasis to a pair of main clauses.

- The bowl of stew is hot *and* delicious.
- You can eat your cake with a spoon *or* fork.
- Bill refuses to eat peas, *nor* will he touch carrots.
- My dog enjoys being bathed *but* hates getting his nails trimmed.
- I hate to waste a drop of gas, *for* it is very expensive these days.
- Cassandra fell asleep, *so* Joaquin just went home.
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The English language has seven coordinating conjunctions, and they’re easy to remember if you can just remember **FAN BOYS**:

**For** - Explains reason or purpose (just like “because”)
*I go to the park every Sunday, for I love to watch the ducks on the lake.*

**And** - Adds one thing to another
*I go to the park to watch the ducks on the lake and the shirtless men playing soccer.*

**Nor** - Presents an alternative negative idea to an already stated negative idea
*I don’t go for the fresh air nor really for the ducks. Honestly, I just like the soccer.*

**But** - Shows contrast
*The soccer in the park is entertaining in the winter, but it’s better in the heat of summer.*

**Or** - Presents an alternative or a choice
*The men play on teams: shirts or skins.*

**Yet** - Introduces a contrasting idea that follows the preceding idea logically
*I always take a book to read, yet I never seem to turn a single page.*

**So** - Indicates effect, result or consequence
*I’ve started dating one of the soccer players, so now I have an excuse to watch the game each week.*
Fill in the blanks with the correct coordinating conjunctions.

1. I'm going to go shopping on Sunday _____ buy some new clothes.
2. I've just eaten dinner _____ I'm not hungry
3. Why don't you ring Sue _____ find out what time she's coming over tonight?
4. Don't tell John about his birthday party _____ you'll spoil the surprise
5. I have been saving my money this year _____ next year I plan to take a long holiday in Europe.
6. Secretary to Boss: Do you want anything else _____ can I go home now?
7. I love to travel _____ I hate travelling by bus
8. I'm bored! Let's go out to dinner _____ see a movie
9. I like living in the city _____ my brother prefers living in the country
10. Betty's just got a promotion at work _____ she's very happy
11. Father to Son: You're thirty now. Don't you think it's time that you settled down _____ got married?
12. Tom got a great Christmas bonus from work this year _____ he and his family can have a good vacation this year
13. It's late. You should go to bed now _____ you'll be tired tomorrow
14. The taxi stopped at the train station _____ two men got out of it.
15. I was in the area _____ I thought I'd drop in and say hello
2. **Subordinating conjunctions** join independent and dependent clauses. A subordinating conjunction can signal a cause-and-effect relationship, a contrast, or some other kind of relationship between the clauses. Common subordinating conjunctions are because, since, as, although, though, while, and whereas. Sometimes an adverb, such as until, after, or before can function as a conjunction.

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Discuss the usage of each.
As Sherri blew out the candles atop her birthday cake, she caught her hair on fire.

Sara begins to sneeze *whenever* she opens the window to get a breath of fresh air.

*When* the doorbell rang, my dog Skeeter barked loudly.

We looked on top of the refrigerator, *where* Jenny will often hide a bag of chocolate chip cookies.

*Because* I was thirsty, I drank a glass of water.
Choose the correct subordination conjunction to complete the sentence.

1. (Since, Whereas) my wife likes to travel abroad, I prefer to stay at home for my vacations.
2. (Although, Because) it was raining, I didn't get wet.
3. Jerry passed the exam first time (as, while) I had to retake it three times.
4. Jun couldn't buy any Christmas presents (because, even though) he didn't have any money.
5. I will be late today (though, because) my car has broken down.
6. Paula got the job (even though, as) she had no experience.
7. (Since, Whereas) Mei Li doesn't speak English, she can't go to university in Canada.
8. I don't drink coffee (although, as) it makes me nervous.
9. I make it a point to visit the Taj Mahal (while, whenever) I go to Agra.
10. This is the place (where, why) I used to stay when I was studying at college.
11. (Unless, Because) you work hard, you can’t pass the entrance test.
12. He could not get a seat, (as, though) he came early.
13. (Because, Even though) he didn’t have much money, he was still able to buy an expensive gift for his father.
14. (Until, While) he buys his father an expensive gift, he won’t buy anything for himself.
15. (After, Before) the basement flooded, we spent all day cleaning up.
16. I don’t want to go to the movies (so that, because) I hate the smell of popcorn.
17. (Although, Because) she tried really hard, she lost the race.
18. (Even though, Even if) she comes, I will not talk to her.
3. As suggested by their name, **correlative conjunctions** correlate, working in pairs to join phrases or words that carry equal importance within a sentence. Like many of the most interesting parts of speech, correlative conjunctions are fun to use. At the same time, there are some important rules to remember for using them correctly.

**RULES:**

- When using correlative conjunctions, ensure **verbs** agree so your sentences make sense. For example: *Every night, either loud music or fighting neighbors wake John from his sleep.*
- When you use a correlative conjunction, you must be sure that **pronouns** agree. For example: *Neither Debra nor Sally expressed her annoyance when the cat broke the antique lamp.*
- When using correlative conjunctions, be sure to keep parallel structure intact. Equal grammatical units need to be incorporated into the entire sentence. For example: *Not only did Mary grill burgers for Michael, but she also fixed a steak for her dog, Vinny.*
Examples:

- I want either the cheesecake or the frozen hot chocolate.
- I’ll have both the cheesecake and the frozen hot chocolate.
- I didn’t know whether you’d want the cheesecake or the frozen hot chocolate, so I got you both.
- Oh, you want neither the cheesecake nor the frozen hot chocolate? No problem.
- I’ll eat them both - not only the cheesecake but also the frozen hot chocolate.
- I see you’re in the mood not for dessert but appetizers. I’ll help you with those too.
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More Examples:

Bowling isn’t as fun as skeet shooting.

There are as many curtains as there are windows.

She’d rather play the drums than sing.

Such was the nature of their relationship that they never would have made it even if they’d wanted to.

No sooner had I started mowing the lawn than it started raining.
1. _____ Alex _____ Carlos applied for the job. (Whether ... Or /Both ... and)
2. I found _____ my homework _____ my textbook under my bed. (both ... And/ whether ... Or)
3. I can’t decide _____ I should take French next year _____ take Spanish. (either...or/ whether... Or)
4. _____ my brother _____ my sister can go to the game. (Whether ... Or /Neither ... nor)
5. _____ you clean your room _____ you will stay home this weekend. (Either...or/Neither... nor)
6. Marissa found _____ the shoes she had lost _____ her favorite necklace. (neither ... nor/ Not only ... but also)
7. _____ we go to San Francisco _____ New York for our holidays, I’ll be happy. (Whether ... or/Either... Or)
8. _____ Chelsea _____ Miranda made the basketball team, even though they practiced hard. (Either ... or /Neither ... nor)
9. _____ I can go to the movies on Saturday, _____ I can go to the mall. (Either...or/Neither... nor)
10. Sorry, but I have _____ the money _____ the time to go shopping right now. (Either...or/Neither... nor)
11. If I buy that dress, _____ I’ll have no lunch money _____ no bus fare for the month. (neither...nor/either...or)
12. _____ my stereo _____ my laptop quit working last week ( Both ... and/Whether ... Or)
13. I can’t decide _____ to play soccer this year _____ take gymnastics. ( neither ... Nor /whether ... or)
The End