

TRANSITION WORDS

Have you ever received comments on an assignment that your language is “choppy” or your thoughts are “disconnected”? If so, your writing may need some transitional words or phrases to keep your reader moving forward without stumbling on a thought, sentence, or paragraph that seems out of place.

In writing, **transitions** act as road signs by alerting readers to additions and changes in discourse. Transitions can also bridge gaps by establishing connections between two or more ideas. They guide readers through thoughts, sentences, and paragraphs, thereby improving the cohesion of your piece.

There are different types of transitions you can use for different writing scenarios:

- ⇒ **Addition**: when providing further insights on an existing idea or thought.
 - » *Furthermore*, we went to the grocery store.
- ⇒ **Comparison**: when noting the similarities between two things.
 - » I think apples are good. *Likewise*, I think oranges are good.
- ⇒ **Consequence**: when an effect follows from a cause.
 - » *As a result*, she got a better grade on her paper.
- ⇒ **Contrast**: when noting differences between two things.
 - » She went to the movies; *however*, she missed the previews.
- ⇒ **Emphasis**: when emphasizing a central idea to your paper.
 - » *Above all*, you completed the assignment on time.
- ⇒ **Generalization**: when explaining a fact about a person, place, or thing that is true most times.
 - » *For the most part*, kids like to play video games.
- ⇒ **Illustration**: when giving an example.
 - » My parents make us supper every night. *For instance*, they made spaghetti last night.
- ⇒ **Position**: when citing one thing in physical relation to another thing.
 - » The cat slept *next to* the dog.
- ⇒ **Restatement**: when wording a previous thought in a different way.
 - » *In other words*, the meeting was cancelled.
- ⇒ **Sequence/Time**: when ordering things in sequence.
 - » *For the time being*, the swimming pool is closed.
- ⇒ **Summary**: when concluding.
 - » *To conclude*, exercising positively influences a person’s overall well-being.

To use the list below, determine what type of transition best suits your purpose. Then, search the appropriate grouping for a word that fits well in your sentence.

Addition:

Again
Also
And
As well as
Besides
Coupled with
Further
Furthermore
In addition
Moreover
Together with
Too
What is more

Contrast:

By contrast
Contrarily
Conversely
Even so
However
Instead
Nevertheless
Nonetheless
On the other hand
Otherwise
Rather
Still
Yet

Illustration:

As an illustration
For example
For instance
For one

Sequence/Time:

Afterwards
At first
At the same time
Currently
During
Earlier
Finally
First*
For now
For the time being
In time
Later (on)
Meanwhile
Next
Recently
Simultaneously
Soon
Subsequently
Then

Comparison:

Comparatively
In comparison
In the same way
Likewise
Similarly

Consequence:

Accordingly
As a result
Consequently
Hence
So
Then
Therefore
Thus

Emphasis:

Above all
Chiefly
Especially
Indeed
In fact
Particularly
Singularly
Truly
With attention to
Indubitable

Position:

Above
Adjacent
Behind
Below
Beside
Beyond
Here
Nearby
Next to
There

Summary:

In brief
In conclusion
In short
In sum
To conclude
To summarize

Restatement:

In essence
In other words
Namely
That is (to say)

Generalization:

As a rule
For the most part
Generally
In general
Ordinarily
Usually

*If you want to number ideas in your writing, avoid *firstly*, *secondly*, *thirdly*, and so on. Instead write *first*, *second*, *third*, etc.