

Coordinating conjunctions are words that link words, phrases, or clauses of equal importance. There are special rules for using commas with coordinating conjunctions.

See also:Defining relative clauses **81**Ellipsis **89****110.1 USING "AND" TO JOIN SENTENCES**

"And" is used to join two sentences together in order to avoid repeating words that appear in both, and to link ideas.

There's a library. There's a restaurant.

There's a library **and** a restaurant.



"There's" is the same as "There is."

The second "there's" can be dropped when joining sentences using "and."

FURTHER EXAMPLES

Jazmin's sister lives **and** works in Paris.



I bought a dress **and** some shoes for the party tonight.



My father **and** brother are both engineers.



My sister called earlier, **and** she told me she's pregnant!



Simon plays video games **and** watches TV every night.



I feel sick, I ate two sandwiches **and** a large slice of cake for lunch.

110.2 USING A COMMA INSTEAD OF "AND"

For lists of more than two items, a comma can replace "and."

This comma is replacing "and" in the list.

There's a library, a store, **and** a café.

Another comma is used before the "and."



The "and" is kept between the final two nouns.

110.3 "OR"

"Or" is most often used to list two or more choices or alternatives.

"Or" is used if there is a choice.

Do you want to go to Germany **or** France?



"Or" can also be used to talk about the consequences (usually negative) of an action.

"Or" is used to show that missing the train is a consequence of being late.

Don't be late, **or** you will miss the train.



FURTHER EXAMPLES



Should we go out **or** should we stay at home instead?



Should we paint the kitchen blue **or** green?



I can't decide whether to get a dog **or** a cat.



Be careful when cooking, **or** you might burn yourself.

110.4 "NOR"

"Nor" shows that two or more things are not true or do not happen. After "nor," use a positive form of the verb, and invert the verb as for a question.

I've never eaten lobster, **nor** do I want to.

The subject comes after the verb.



FURTHER EXAMPLES



He can't play the guitar, **nor** can he sing.



Fiona didn't turn up to dinner, **nor** did she answer my calls.



My television doesn't work, **nor** does my stereo.

TIP

"Nor" is uncommon in informal English.

110.5 "BUT"

"But" is used to join a positive statement to a negative statement, or to show a contrast between two clauses.

There's a hotel. There isn't a store.



There's a hotel, **but** there isn't a store.



FURTHER EXAMPLES



My daughter likes to eat apples, **but** she doesn't like pears.



I wanted to be an architect, **but** I didn't pass my exams.



I went to the supermarket, **but** I forgot my purse.



I'm on a diet, **but** I find it hard to avoid chocolate.



My friend does tap dancing, **but** she doesn't do ballet.

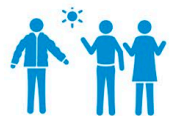


My friends invited me out tonight, **but** I don't feel well enough to go.

110.6 "YET"

"Yet" has a similar meaning to "but." It is used when something happens in spite of something else, or when something is true, even though it seems to contradict something else.

It's a warm day, **yet** Raymond's wearing a coat.



FURTHER EXAMPLES

George lives in the countryside, **yet** he works in a nearby city.

There was a school near my house, **yet** I went to one on the other side of town.

I've asked him to be quiet and **yet** he continues to talk during lessons.

110.7 "SO"

When "so" is a conjunction, it is used to show that something happens as a consequence of something else.

It was a lovely day, **so** we went for a walk.



FURTHER EXAMPLES



My house was a mess, **so** I spent the weekend cleaning.



The cathedral is very famous, **so** it attracts a lot of tourists.



I don't like pasta, **so** I rarely go to Italian restaurants.



I work outside, **so** I have to be careful that I don't get sunburned.



Stephen moved to London, **so** he speaks English quite well now.



I ate before I came out, **so** I will only have a coffee.

110.8 USING COMMAS WITH COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

If a coordinating conjunction is joining two main clauses, a comma usually goes before the conjunction.

It was raining, **and** there was lightning.



If a coordinating conjunction is joining two items, there is no need for a comma.

I'm going to wear jeans **and** a shirt.



If "and" or "or" is joining three or more items, a comma is usually added between each item and before the conjunction.

I need eggs, flour, **and** milk.



Would you like tea, coffee, **or** juice?

