Transitional Words and Phrases

This page only provides a list of transitional words; be certain you understand their meanings before you use them. Often, there exists a slight, but significant, difference between two apparently similar words. Also remember that while transitions describe relationships between ideas, they do not automatically create relationships between ideas for your reader. Use transitions with enough context in a sentence or paragraph to make the relationships clear.

Examples of Transitions:

Illustration

 Thus, for example, for instance, namely, to illustrate, in other words, in particular, specifically, such as.

Contrast

 On the contrary, contrarily, notwithstanding, but, however, nevertheless, in spite of, in contrast, yet, on one hand, on the other hand, rather, or, nor, conversely, at the same time, while this may be true.

Addition

 And, in addition to, furthermore, moreover, besides, than, too, also, both-and, another, equally important, first, second, etc., again, further, last, finally, not only-but also, as well as, in the second place, next, likewise, similarly, in fact, as a result, consequently, in the same way, for example, for instance, however, thus, therefore, otherwise.

Time

 After, afterward, before, then, once, next, last, at last, at length, first, second, etc., at first, formerly, rarely, usually, another, finally, soon, meanwhile, at the same time, for a minute, hour, day, etc., during the morning, day, week, etc., most important, later, ordinarily, to begin with, afterwards, generally, in order to, subsequently, previously, in the meantime, immediately, eventually, concurrently, simultaneously.

Space

 At the left, at the right, in the center, on the side, along the edge, on top, below, beneath, under, around, above, over, straight ahead, at the top, at the bottom, surrounding, opposite, at the rear, at the front, in front of, beside, behind, next to, nearby, in the distance, beyond, in the forefront, in the foreground, within sight, out of sight, across, under, nearer, adjacent, in the background.

Concession

 Although, at any rate, at least, still, thought, even though, granted that, while it may be true, in spite of, of course.

Similarity Or Comparison

 Similarly, likewise, in like fashion, in like manner, analogous to.

Emphasis

 Above all, indeed, truly, of course, certainly, surely, in fact, really, in truth, again, besides, also, furthermore, in addition.

Details

 Specifically, especially, in particular, to explain, to list, to enumerate, in detail, namely, including.

Examples

 For example, for instance, to illustrate, thus, in other words, as an illustration, in particular.

Consequence or Result

 So that, with the result that, thus, consequently, hence, accordingly, for this reason, therefore, so, because, since, due to, as a result, in other words, then.

Summary

 Therefore, finally, consequently, thus, in short, in conclusion, in brief, as a result, accordingly.

Suggestion

 For this purpose, to this end, with this in mind, with this purpose in mind, therefore.

Transitional Words and Phrases

Updated lists by Joanna Taraba, Writing Fellow, WC '05