Transition Words

Transition words show the relationship between ideas, within a sentence or between sentences and paragraphs.

Common transition word categories

Similarity/Addition

Adds information that agrees with, reinforces, or contributes to a previous idea.

likewise	also
furthermore	as well
moreover	similarly
further	in fact
additionally	again
equally important	indeed
in the same way	in addition

Qualification

Adds a condition to the idea; sets limits or boundaries for the idea; considers possible opposition

for the most part	sometimes
generally	granted
often	considering
ordinarily	of course
usually	admittedly
rarely	unfortunately
occasionally	fortunately

Introduction

Brings an idea into the discussion.

firstly	with regard to
to begin	primarily
in the first place	similarly
initially	regarding
as for	concerning
in the case of	when it comes to

Emphasis

Places more importance on the idea, drawing the reader's focus.

notably	in fact
most significantly	specifically
primarily	in particular
particularly	most importantly
above all	essentially
most of all	certainly

Contrast

Establishes an opposition between ideas; often leads to a conclusion or decision between them.

although	despite
conversely	however
even so	instead
even if	though
irrespective	whereas
nevertheless	while
notwithstanding	still
on the contrary	yet
regardless	rather
on the one hand	on the other hand

Sequence and causation

Establishes an order for ideas; shows how one idea follows from another.

first	thus
second	therefore
third	then
consequently	hence
subsequently	next
as a result	before
accordingly	for this reason
since	because

Conclusion

Shows that the discussion of an idea is complete.

finally	to conclude
ultimately	in conclusion
in the end	in summary
in any case	to sum up
therefore	without a doubt
thus	regardless

Exemplification

Introduces an example of a previous idea.

to illustrate	take a look at
for instance	such as
for example	one such
an example would be	to demonstrate
in one such case	in this case

Choosing transition words

- Think about the relationship you want to convey.
    - What is the connection between this sentence and the sentence or paragraph before it?
    - What do you want the reader to understand about the relationship between them?

- Select a category and a word within that category which best conveys that information.
    - If the relationship is too complex to explain with just one word, try using a whole phrase or even a whole sentence.
    - Avoid repetition; use different transition words in the same category if necessary.

- Remember that transition words can change the whole meaning of a sentence.
    - The wrong transition word can make a sentence confusing or even nonsensical.

Placing transition words

There are three options for placing transition words:

- The beginning of a sentence
    - This emphasizes the relationship between the ideas, by making the transition word the focus for the reader.

- The middle of a sentence (after a particular word or idea)
    - Emphasizes the preceding idea or word.
    - Useful when introducing an idea for the first time.

- The end of a sentence.
    - De-emphasizes the relationship and emphasizes the preceding idea.
    - Least common placement for transition words; use carefully.

Example (with transitions):

When it comes to *tech support, there is **often** a script that employees follow to deal with common problems. **First**, they suggest that you turn your device off and **then** turn it back on; **finally**, if the problem is still there, they will actually try to solve it.*

In fact, *this does **usually** solve the problem, **although** it can be frustrating if you know there's a real issue - **for example**, if you've already tried restarting your device, and it didn't work. **Above all,** try to remember that tech support is **ultimately** just as frustrating for the support staff on the other end of the phone as it is for you!*

Example (with no transitions):

There is a script that tech support employees follow to deal with common problems. They suggest that you turn your device off and turn it back on. If the problem is still there, they will actually try to solve it.

This does solve the problem. It can be frustrating if you know there's a real issue - if you've already tried restarting your device and it didn't work. Try to remember that tech support is just as frustrating for the support staff on the other end o fthe phone as it is for you!