



Figure 1 The Writing Center and Academic Resource Center logo

TRANSITIONS

Transitions are words and phrases that link sentences and paragraphs to make a piece of work coherent. Transitions clarify relationships between sentences and paragraphs that may not be clear to the reader.

Although the following paragraph is understandable, the addition of a few transitions would make the relationships between the sentences clearer and the paragraph coherent:

Betty goes to The Writing Center every Tuesday and Thursday. Her English grades have improved dramatically. Betty became an English tutor. She visits the Math Lab every Friday. Her math grade has not improved as much. She will continue to get help with her math homework.



Figure 2 Cartoon image of a stop and go light

Transitions are like *signals*. They signal the relationships between thoughts, ideas, and concepts.

Betty goes to the Writing Center every Tuesday and Thursday. Consequently, her English grades have improved dramatically. After two months of tutoring, Betty became an English tutor. In addition, she visits the Math Lab every Friday. However, her math grade has not improved as much. Therefore, she will continue to get help with her math homework.

- In addition signals that Betty goes to The Math Lab *and* The Writing Center.
- Consequently signals the *effect* of English tutoring on Betty's grades.
- After signals the *time period* between the start of Betty's tutoring sessions and her getting a job as a tutor.
- However signals a *contrast* between Betty's improvement in English and math.

- Therefore signals the *conclusion* that Betty will receive more help in math, which she lacks.

Addition signals: one, first of all, second, the third reason, also, next, another, and, in addition, moreover, furthermore, finally, last of all.

Change of direction signals: but, however, yet, in contrast, although, otherwise, still,

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Transitional Expressions</i>
to add	also, and, and then, as well, besides, beyond that, first (second, third, last), for one thing, furthermore, in addition, moreover, next, what is more
to compare	also, as well, both (neither), in the same way, likewise, similarly
to contrast	although, be that as it may, but, even though, however, in contrast, nevertheless, on the contrary, on the other hand, yet, whereas
to concede (a point)	certainly, granted that, of course, no doubt, to be sure
to emphasize	above all, especially, in fact, in particular, for example
to illustrate	as a case in point, as an illustration, for example, for instance, in particular, one such, yet another
to place	above, beside, below, beyond, farther, here, inside, nearby, next to, on the far side, opposite, outside, to the east (south)
to qualify	perhaps, possibly, potentially, maybe
to give a reason	as, because, for, since
to show a result	and so, because of this, as a consequence, as a result, consequently, for this reason, hence, so, therefore, thus
to summarize	all in all, finally, in brief, in other words, lastly, on the whole, to sum up
to place in time	after a while, afterward, at last, at present, briefly, currently, during, eventually, finally, first (second, and so on), gradually, immediately, in the future, later, meanwhile, next, now, recently, soon, suddenly, then

(Based on Fawcett 58-9)

on the contrary, on the other hand.

Illustration signals: for example, for instance, specifically, as an illustration, once, such as.

Conclusion signals: therefore, consequently, thus, then, as a result, in summary, to conclude, last of all, finally.

This handout is based on the following texts:

Fawcett, Susan, and Alan Sandberg. *Evergreen: A Guide to Writing*. 4th ed. New Jersey: Houghton Mifflin, 1992.

For further reference, see the following books:

Heffernan, James A.W., and John E. Lincoln. *Writing a College Handbook*, 4th ed. New York: W,W, Norton and Company, 1994. 188-90.

Spangler, Mary S, and Rita R. Werner. *The Structured Essay*. Dubuque: Kendall Company, 1986. 285-88.

All of the above texts are available in The Writing Center.

