

There are two kinds of conjunctions – coordinating and subordinating.

Read the following sentences:

God made the country and man made the town.

I have not seen him since he was a boy.

In the first sentence, two independent clauses of equal importance are joined together by *and*. A conjunction which joins together two clauses of equal rank is called a coordinating conjunction.

In the second sentence *since* joins two clauses of unequal importance. *I have not seen him* is the main clause because it makes complete sense and can stand alone. *Since he was a boy* is a subordinate clause which modifies the verb *have not seen* in the main clause.

A conjunction that joins together clauses of unequal importance is called a subordinating conjunction.

Coordinating conjunctions

The chief coordinating conjunctions are *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *so*, *for*, *either...or*, *neither...nor*. A coordinating conjunction usually connects sentence elements of the same grammatical clause: e.g. nouns with nouns, adverbs with adverbs, phrases with phrases and clauses with clauses.

Jack and Jill went up the hill. (Here the conjunction *and* joins the nouns Jack and Jill.)

He worked diligently and patiently. (Here the conjunction *and* joins the adverbs *diligently* and *patiently*.)

He is slow but he is steady. (Here the conjunction *but* joins the clauses 'he is slow' and 'he is steady'.)

Kinds of coordinating conjunctions

There are mainly four kinds of coordinating conjunctions:

Cumulative or copulative

Adversative

Alternative

Illative