

Correct use of some conjunctions

Conjunctions are used to connect words, phrases or clauses.

Note that you need only one conjunction to connect two clauses.

In this lesson, we will review the correct use of some conjunctions.

Except and unless

Except cannot be used as a conjunction equivalent to unless.

Incorrect: I will not come except you invite me.

Correct: I will not come unless you invite me.

Except is a preposition. It should be followed by a noun or noun-equivalent.

He ate everything on his plate except potatoes. (NOT He ate everything on his plate unless potatoes.)

Except and without

The preposition without also cannot be used as an equivalent to unless.

Unless you leave my house, I will call the police. (NOT Without you leave my house, I will call the police.)

Without is a preposition. It should be followed by a noun or noun equivalent.

Without your help, I would have failed. (NOT Except your help, I would have failed.)

The sentences given below express more or less the same meaning, but structures are different.

Compare:

Correct use of some conjunctions

I shall not go unless you do.

I shall not go without you.

Like and as

Like is a preposition. It cannot be used to connect two clauses. It should be followed by a noun or noun equivalent which acts as its object.

She looks like her mother.

As is a conjunction. It should be followed by a clause.

She walks as her mother does. (NOT She walks as her mother.)