

Conjunctions are divided into two classes: coordinating conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions.

Read the following sentence:

Birds fly and fish swim.

This sentence contains two independent statements or two statements of equal rank or importance. The conjunction that joins together two clauses of equal rank is called a coordinating conjunction.

### Notes

Coordinating conjunctions generally connect sentence elements of the same grammatical class. Examples: nouns with nouns, adverbs with adverbs, phrases with phrases and clauses with clauses.

Jack and Jill went up the hill. (Here the coordinating conjunction and connects two nouns.)

He worked diligently and patiently. (Here the coordinating conjunction and connects two adverbs.)

The chief coordinating conjunctions are: and, but, for, or, nor, also, either...or, neither...nor.

### Kinds of coordinating conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions are of four kinds.

Cumulative or copulative conjunctions

Adversative conjunctions

Disjunctive or alternative conjunctions

Illative conjunctions

Cumulative conjunctions

Cumulative conjunctions merely add one statement to another. Examples are: and, both...and, as well as, not only...but also.

Alice wrote the letters and Peter posted them.

The cow got up and walked away slowly.

Adversative conjunctions

Adversative conjunctions express contrast between two statements. Examples are: but, still, yet, whereas, while, nevertheless etc.

The rope was thin but it was strong.

She is poor but she is happy.

He is hardworking whereas his brother is quite the reverse.

Disjunctive or alternative conjunctions

Conjunctions which present two alternatives are called disjunctive or alternative conjunctions. Examples are: or, either...or, neither...nor, neither, nor, otherwise, else etc.

She must weep, or she will die.

Either he is mad, or he feigns madness.

They toil not, neither do they spin.

Neither a borrower, nor a lender be.

Illative conjunctions

Some coordinating conjunctions express something inferred from another statement or fact. These are called illative conjunctions. Examples are: for and so.

Somebody came, for I heard a knock at the door.

He must be asleep, for there is no light in his room.

He has been working hard, so he will pass.