

MPC English & Study Skills Center

Conjunctions: Coordinating

There are four types of conjunctions: Coordinating, Subordinating, Conjunctive Adverbs, and Correlative Conjunctions. **See also** the individual handouts for each of these types.

Coordinating conjunctions join words, phrases, or clauses of equal value. They can be remembered easily with the acronym **FANBOYS**: **for, and, nor, bt, or, yet, so**

✦ If the coordinating conjunction joins two words, two phrases, or two dependent clauses, there is no comma before the conjunction. A comma comes before a conjunction joining two independent clauses. If the conjunction joins a series of more than two items, then there must be a comma to separate the items and a comma before the conjunction.

✦ Words:

Tom or Mary will work late. (two subjects)

Kim, Minh, and Yong studied until 3 am. (3 subjects)

Maria stopped at the store and bought milk. (2 verbs)

Sonya read the assignment, wrote the paper, and turned it in. (3 verbs)

✦ Phrases:

Sitting quietly and studying hard, I didn't see the sign. (2 participial phrases)

In the morning, in the afternoon, and in the evening, Jackson watches TV. (3 prepositional phrases)

✦ Clauses (Dependent and Independent):

Dependent:

When I get up in the morning and before I drink my coffee, I don't like to talk to anyone.
(2 dependent clauses)

I could see that he was tired, (that) he was cranky, but (that) he was conscientious.
(3 dependent clauses)

Independent: Commas are always used to separate independent clauses that are connected with a coordinating conjunction:

Stanley does the dishes, for he loves me.

Jorge studied for the final, and he got a good grade.

Susan doesn't like to eat meat, nor does she like vegetables.

Harry hates to work, nor does he like to study.

Jane worked hard at her job, but she was laid off.

Dena will go to UC Berkeley, or she will go to Harvard.

I realized that the woman was lying, yet I was shocked to discover the truth.

Saori drove to the market, so she could buy groceries.

✦ **Note:** **Nor** is a bit different from the other coordinating conjunctions. When **nor** is used to join independent clauses, the order of the following subject and verb is reversed.