

Some suggest conclusion:

Hence

Therefore

In sum

Thus

Consequently

Transitions provide readers with the security of knowing that you are in control of the material. They also help you, the author, because if you can't find an appropriate transition, your ideas may not be as coherent as you presume.

Samples for Practice:

1. I believe that W. C. Fields is the funniest man who has ever lived. *The Bank Dick* and *It's a Gift* are two of my favorite movies. I respect the judgment of anyone who agrees with me. Those who reject this opinion always drop in my estimation.
2. When I go to a party, people always seem to talk about travel or cooking. I know nothing about either subject. I don't say anything. I don't go to parties.
3. Harry loved to watch television. He could watch all day. He could simply sit and stare at that box. His business associate, Sam, had no patience for such wasting of time. He actually did the work.
4. Romeo rarely thinks before he acts or talks. He races from one situation to another. He never has a plan that he follows. He is not nearly as intelligent as Juliet.
5. When you learn to drive, you have to keep a lot of rules in mind. You have to drive defensively and watch out for mistakes that other drivers might make. You have to be careful of pedestrians who don't look where they're walking. Too many beginning drivers are concerned only with getting there fast.

6. VARY SENTENCE STRUCTURE

All of us have heard speakers who talk in a monotone or relentless rhythm. Their ideas may be interesting, but the dull presentation crushes audience response. The same phenomenon occurs in writing.

We're not speaking of suspense fiction, where short, terse sentences may create tension:

He walked up the stairs. The floor creaked. He felt for the doorknob.

It was cold. He turned it. The door slowly opened.

The light revealed a sight too horrible for words.

In nonfiction, however, such style becomes numbing, so you want to vary your tone. For instance, you may write:

We arrived at the lake early, and the fish were already jumping.

The example contains two coordinate clauses, a legitimate structure, but the combination of a subordinate clause and a main clause may be an intriguing variation:

When we arrived at the lake early, the fish were already jumping.

Sometimes an introductory phrase works:

Arriving early, we saw that the fish were already jumping.

Or an unexpected question:

We arrived at six in the morning. What would we do first?

You can also combine sentences to make the construction longer:

When we arrived early, the fish were already jumping, so we took out our rods, scurried into the boat, and began the serious work of the day.

In lengthening, however, beware of running on forever:

What we noticed first when we arrived was the fish, already jumping, leaping, so near our boat that we, free from the pressures of the

workaday world, yet not without care, but somehow with unbridled enthusiasm, itself always tempered by knowledge of the transience of the day, and of time alone, in contrast with the permanence of the lake and the sun beaming overhead, could not help but be reminded of the wonders of existence that never ceased to accompany any journey of this magnitude, especially one taken in conjunction with the special joy to be savored in the presence of this rare company that included not only the three familiar members of our party but also the two guests, each of whom brought a distinctive, not to say singular, aptitude for the adventure at hand, which we would long remember as one of the highlights of the all-too-brief portion of eternity that would be forever known as "the weekend."

The sentence is grammatically proper, but hopelessly convoluted. Such a construction may work for Hegel or Henry James, but not for the rest of us. When you find this sort of monstrosity in your prose, divide it into shorter sentences.

Good writing is like good music. Each is founded on melody and rhythm, and as writers we want to infuse our prose with both.

Samples for Practice:

1. We drove to the park, and we took the roller coaster, and we rode in the bumper cars, and we boarded the Ferris wheel, and we became sick.
2. We always study for exams together. We try to push each other to do our best. We usually do well. Sometimes we don't.
3. The car had been sitting on the road for three days. No one claimed it. Finally someone did. A man said it was his. The man was a stranger in town.
4. Dr. Finnegan, who works in his office on Piedmont Avenue, was born and educated in Ohio, but he has practiced in New York for eight years, and one day he hopes to return to Ohio.
5. The dish that he dropped came from a collection he bought at a time when he was on vacation from a job from which he was fired before he went to school to begin a new career as a caterer.

7. USE PARALLEL STRUCTURES FOR
COORDINATE ELEMENTS

Consider this sentence:

He prefers table tennis, chess, and to play golf.

In his sequence of activities, the writer starts to build a pattern of three nouns, but abandons it by changing the last to an infinitive. The sentence therefore lacks parallelism. Here's one solution:

He prefers table tennis, chess, and golf.

Here's another:

He prefers to play table tennis, chess, and golf.

The same principle applies to correlatives, such as "not only . . . but also" and "either . . . or," as in this ill-conceived creation:

She is not only a fine teacher, but also her scholarship shows promise.

Whatever construction follows "not only" should follow "but also." In this case, "not only" is succeeded by a noun and an adjective, so the same pattern should follow "but also":

She is not only a fine teacher but also a promising scholar.

Consider another sentence that lacks parallelism:

His plans include hauling boxes, bags, and buying mops.

One way to rewrite is to include an additional verb:

His plans include hauling boxes, tossing trash, and buying mops.

In this version all three objects of "include" are participle-noun combinations. We could also cut one verb, and allow the first to control three parallel objects:

His plans include using boxes, bags, and mops.