



PUNCTUATING THE CONJUNCTIVE ADVERB IN SIMPLE COMPOUND SENTENCES

In this module, you will learn to identify conjunctive adverbs in simple and simple compound sentences and then use

- Semicolon and comma punctuation with conjunctive adverbs in compound sentences
- Comma punctuation with conjunctive adverbs in simple sentences.

Introduction

We are going to punctuate simple (one-clause) sentences containing conjunctive adverbs. We are also going to punctuate simple compound sentences (two independent clauses) containing conjunctive adverbs.

The Conjunctive Adverb

We will now investigate the conjunctive adverb, learn its function, and its punctuation. We have dozens of conjunctive adverbs in the English language. Let's look at a few of the most common ones.

HOWEVER, the schedule had already been arranged.

MOREOVER, the teams had no choice concerning home field.

THUS, the team would have to forfeit the game.

AS A MATTER OF FACT, their pride would not let them forfeit the game.

THEN the team decided to call a time-out.

Note the lack of comma punctuation in the last sentence.

Many textbooks differentiate between "conjunctive adverbs" and "transitional expressions." We won't. We will simplify matters by stating that if a conjunction is neither subordinating nor coordinating, we will treat it as a conjunctive adverb.

Listed below are some conjunctive adverbs that we encounter quite often.

List:

As a result, before that, besides, briefly, by contrast, certainly, concurrently, consequently, earlier, finally;

first (etc.)*, for example, formerly, further, furthermore, hence, however, in addition, in all, in a word, indeed;



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in fact, instead, in summary, later, lastly (etc.)*, likewise, momentarily, moreover, namely, nevertheless, next;

none the less, now, nowadays, of course, on the contrary, on the other hand, otherwise, previously, really, similarly;

simultaneously, still, subsequently, that is, then, therefore, thus.

*Include all words such as second, third, last, etc., and words such as firstly, secondly, finally, etc.

The above list of conjunctive adverbs is not exhaustive. Many, many more exist. As a matter of fact, you may create your own conjunctive adverbs to suit your particular needs. It would be impossible for anyone to memorize them all. Luckily, we have memorized the lists of coordinating conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions. Thus, identifying conjunctive adverbs should prove quite easy.

*If a conjunction is neither coordinating nor subordinating, call it a
CONJUNCTIVE ADVERB.*

Function

We use conjunctive adverbs to join ideas of equal value. But in joining these equal ideas, we want to show a strong relationship. A conjunctive adverb joins mutually dependent but equal ideas. The ideas may reside in separate sentences or in the same sentence.

Separate Sentences

Following are some examples of conjunctive adverbs providing mutual support or dependency of various kinds. Notice that the support may span across sentences.

Chronological (time) support:

John refused to apply for the job. **SUBSEQUENTLY**, he regretted his decision.

Summation Support:

John refused to apply for the job. **IN A WORD**, he lived to regret his decision.

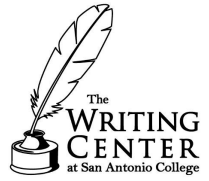
Explanation (reasons) support:

John refused to apply for the job. **INDEED**, he said it was not suitable to his talents.

Notice in the connected ideas above that unless we present the first idea (sentence), we have no justification to write the second idea (sentence). Ideas connected by conjunctive adverbs cannot intelligently exist alone.

Punctuation

We place commas after conjunctive adverbs that start sentences.



Within Sentences

Following are some examples of conjunctive adverbs providing mutual support and dependency of various kinds within the same sentence.

Contrast Support:

John refused to apply for the job; **HOWEVER**, he pretended to look for one.

Cause and Effect Support:

John refused to apply for the job; **AS A RESULT**, his financial situation worsened.

Reinforcement (adding reasons) Support:

John refused to apply for the job; **MOREOVER**, he wouldn't even discuss why.

Notice in the connected ideas that the second idea is dependent on the first. The conjunctive adverb creates this mutual dependency or relationship.

Punctuation

When a conjunctive adverb joins two independent clauses, the conjunctive adverb takes a semicolon in front of it and a comma after. The clause pattern is Independent ; conjunctive adverb , independent.

Exception

We do not use a comma with the conjunctive adverb "then" regardless of whether "then" starts a sentence or joins two independent clauses. Look at the following examples.

"We had checked the ledger thoroughly. **THEN** we mailed the invoices."

"We had checked the ledger thoroughly; **THEN** we mailed the invoices."

The clause pattern is
Independent ; conjunctive adverb independent.

CAUTION:

Here's another one. Read the sentence; follow the steps; then solve your punctuation problem. Sentence:

"The ambulance raced down the street **however** and stopped just in time."

We identify the verb "raced."
We identify "ambulance" as the subject of "raced."

We identify another verb, "stopped."
We identify "ambulance" as the subject of "stopped" also.



Independent

The ambulance raced down the street however and stopped just in time.

Solution

We have a single subject and a compound verb--a single independent clause. The word "however" is not a conjunctive adverb. "However" is an interrupter and requires other punctuation.

The clause pattern is

Independent (no additional punctuation required).

So ensure that you actually have two independent clauses before you start punctuating words as conjunctive adverbs.

Review

Conjunctive adverbs join equally important but mutually dependent ideas. The ideas need not exist in the same sentence.

We place commas after conjunctive adverbs that start sentences.

We place semicolons before and commas after conjunctive adverbs that join clauses.

The conjunctive adverb "then" does not take the comma.

Do not confuse interrupters with conjunctive adverbs.

When joining two independent clauses without using a conjunction, use a semicolon as punctuation. The clause pattern is:

Independent ; independent.

Exercises

Select the clause structure and the comma/semicolon punctuation required for the following three sentences. The answers appear after the last question.

1. The show was aimed at all age groups none the less children seemed to enjoy it most.

- A. Independent (no additional punctuation required)
- B. Independent ; independent
- C. Independent ; conjunctive adverb, independent
- D. Independent ; conjunctive adverb independent (note: no comma)

2. Some wild animals breed in captivity others will not breed in captivity.

- A. Independent (no additional punctuation required)
- B. Independent ; independent
- C. Independent ; conjunctive adverb, independent
- D. Independent ; conjunctive adverb independent (note: no comma)

3. The lioness smelled the scent then she sprang into action.



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- A. Independent (no additional punctuation required)
- B. Independent ; independent
- C. Independent ; conjunctive adverb, independent
- D. Independent ; conjunctive adverb independent (note: no comma)

For the next three sentences, select the sentence pair that is correctly punctuated.

4.

- A. Good friends are always there to help. Sometimes we take them for granted.
- B. Good friends are always there to help. Sometimes; we take them for granted.
- C. Good friends are always there to help. Sometimes, we take them for granted.

5.

- A. The car developed engine trouble. Consequently, we arrived later than planned.
- B. The car developed engine trouble. Consequently we arrived later than planned.
- C. The car developed engine trouble. Consequently; we arrived later than planned.

6.

- A. I cook my own meals. As a result I'm never surprised by the menu.
- B. I cook my own meals. As a result, I'm never surprised by the menu.
- C. I cook my own meals. As a result; I'm never surprised by the menu.

For the last six questions, select the correctly punctuated sentence.

7.

- A. I have to work hard at geology nevertheless I enjoy the subject.
- B. I have to work hard at geology, nevertheless, I enjoy the subject.
- C. I have to work hard at geology; nevertheless I enjoy the subject.
- D. I have to work hard at geology; nevertheless, I enjoy the subject.

8.

- A. Our calculations were right; however our assumptions were wrong.
- B. Our calculations were right; however, our assumptions were wrong.
- C. Our calculations were right, however, our assumptions were wrong.
- D. Our calculations were right, however our assumptions were wrong.

9.

- A. Julianna had packed the night before; thus, she made an early start.
- B. Julianna had packed the night before; thus she made an early start.
- C. Julianna had packed the night before, thus, she made an early start.
- D. Julianna had packed the night before, thus she made an early start.

10.



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- A. Balkaran took lessons to improve his golf; really he became quite good.
- B. Balkaran took lessons to improve his golf, really he became quite good.
- C. Balkaran took lessons to improve his golf; really, he became quite good.
- D. Balkaran took lessons to improve his golf, really, he became quite good.

11.

- A. She filled in the application on Monday subsequently she was invited to an interview on Friday.
- B. She filled in the application on Monday; subsequently, she was invited to an interview on Friday.
- C. She filled in the application on Monday; subsequently she was invited to an interview on Friday.
- D. She filled in the application on Monday, subsequently, she was invited to an interview on Friday.

12.

- A. We threw many long passes; then, we shifted to short passes.
- B. We threw many long passes, then we shifted to short passes.
- C. We threw many long passes, then, we shifted to short passes.
- D. We threw many long passes; then we shifted to short passes.

Answers

1, C. 2, B. 3, D. 4, C. 5, A. 6, B. 7, D. 8, B. 9, A. 10, C. 11, B. 12, D.