

Relationship between Ideas in a Sentence:

Coordination and Subordination

COORDINATION: Coordination Relates "Equal" Ideas

When a sentence contains more than one idea, the ideas may be equal or unequal in rank. Ideas that are equal in rank are coordinate (Co means "equal"; ordinate means "kind" or "rank"; hence coordinate means "of equal kind or rank.")

Meaning	Coordinators	Conjunctive Adverbs	Example
To add an idea	and	in addition, furthermore, moreover, also	Women follow more healthful diets, and they go to doctors more often.
To show time or sequence		first, second, then, next, later, meanwhile, finally	First, robots can perform repetitive tasks without becoming tired or bored. Second, they can fulfill tasks requiring pinpoint accuracy.
To contrast	but yet	however, nevertheless, in contrast, on the other hand	Increasing the size of airports is one solution to traffic congestion; however, this is a long-term solution whose benefits may not be seen for many years into the future.
To show result	so	therefore, thus, consequently, as a result	Native and nonnative English speakers have different needs; therefore, most schools provide separate classes for each group.
To introduce an alternative	or	otherwise	Students must take final exams; otherwise, they receive a grade of incomplete.
To emphasize		in fact, of course, indeed, certainly	The little girl hated spiders; in fact, she was terrified by them.
To provide an example		for example, for instance	In the operating room, robotic equipment can assist the surgeon. For instance, a robot can kill a brain tumor.
To generalize or summarize		in general, overall, in short	Hermes is not only the messenger of Zeus, but the patron of thieves. In general, he is the god of authorized and unauthorized transfers.

Make clear the relationship between the ideas in coordinate clauses by using connectives which express the relationship exactly.

A good writer chooses his connectives carefully. He makes certain that the connectives he chooses will express exactly the relationship he intends between the ideas in the sentence. In order to avoid a monotonous style he also uses a variety of connectives.

SUBORDINATION: Subordination Emphasizes "Main" Ideas

Subordination enables you to show the relative importance of the parts of a sentence. To use subordination is to make one or more parts of a sentence depend on the part that is most important to you.

Subordination allows you to distinguish between more important and less important information, or to bring in supporting detail. Subordination also establishes logical relationships amongst ideas.

Of course, the writer decides which ideas in a sentence are more important and which are less important, and what the logical relationship is between ideas.

The choice made by the writer can produce varying effects as shown in the following examples (the part of the sentence receiving less emphasis is shown in italics):

The future imagined by Wilde was one free of manual labor, *which would leave humans free to create*.
 The future imagined by Wilde, *one that was free of manual labor*, would leave humans free to create.

Types of clauses		Subordinators	Examples
1. Noun clauses		what, where, why, how, where, when, who whom, which, whose, whether, that, if	He knows that his business will be successful. That there is a hole in the ozone layer of the earth's atmosphere is well known.
2. Adjective clauses		who, whom, which, whose, that, where, when	Men who are not married are called bachelors. Last year we traveled to San Francisco, which is famous for its architecture.
3. Adverb clauses	a. time	when, before, after, until, since, as soon as	When he won the money, he decided to buy a car.
	b. place	where, wherever	She drove wherever she wanted.
	c. cause	because, as, since	She got a parking ticket because she parked illegally.
	d. purpose	so that, in order that	He drove fast so that he could get to work on time.
	e. result	so ... that, such ... that	He drove so fast that he got a speeding ticket.
	f. condition	if, unless	If she hadn't won the lottery, she would have been very unhappy.
	g. concession	although, even though	Although she thought she was a good driver, she got a lot of tickets for speeding.

Faulty and Excessive Subordination and Coordination

FAULTY/ EXCESSIVE SUBORDINATION:

Faulty subordination occurs (1) when the more important clause is placed in a subordinate position in the sentence or when the expected relation between clauses is reversed (faulty subordination), or (2) when too many details are added to main clause (excessive subordination), stringing together a long series of subordinate clauses referring to some element in a previous clause.

We can correct faulty subordination by switching the subordinating conjunction to the beginning of the other clause.

To avoid over subordination,

- leave out unnecessary details;
- change clauses into phrases or single words; and, if possible,
- break up an over subordinated sentence into two (or more) sentences.

FAULTY/EXCESSIVE COORDINATION

Faulty coordination occurs (1) when it is illogical or inappropriate to assign equal importance to two or more coordinate clauses, (2) when the connecting word fails to create a reasonable relationship between the clauses (faulty coordination), or (3) When sentences are combined using "all-purpose" conjunctions such as **and** or **so** leading to a rambling sentence that is an exceedingly long sentence that contains too many independent clauses (excessive coordination).

We can revise faulty coordination by putting part of the sentence in a dependent clause, modifying phrase, or appositive phrase. To avoid excessive coordination break up an over coordinated sentence into two or more sentences.

Stringy Sentences to be Broken up

Avoid stringy compound sentences. The rambling style which results from their use may be corrected by separating the material into shorter sentences, or by subordinating lesser ideas to the main thought.

Faulty: The second speaker had sat quietly waiting, and he was a man of a different type, and he began calmly, yet from the very first words he showed great earnestness.

Right: The second speaker, who had sat quietly waiting, was a man of a different type. He began calmly, yet from his very first words he showed great earnestness.

Choppy Sentences to be Combined

Do not use two or three short sentences to express ideas which will make a more unified impression in one sentence. Place subordinate ideas in subordinate grammatical constructions.

Choppy: Excavating is the first operation in street paving. The excavating is usually done by means of a steam shovel. The shovel scoops up the dirt and loads it directly into wagons.

Right: Excavating, the first operation in street paving, is usually done by a steam shovel which loads the dirt directly into wagons.

Coordination and Subordination: Review Exercises

Use coordination and subordination to combine the following groups of simple sentences into one or more longer sentences. Omit repeated words. A variety of combinations is possible.

1. My car is not starting on cold mornings. I think the battery needs to be replaced. I already had it recharged once. I don't think it would help to charge it again.
2. Louse used a dandruff shampoo. She still had dandruff. She decided to see a dermatologist.
3. Al's parents want him to be a doctor. Al wants to be a salesman. He impresses people with his charm.
4. The teacher conducted a discussion period. Jack sat at the desk with his head down. He did not want the teacher to call on him. He had not read the assignment.
5. Lola wanted to get a quick lunch at the cafeteria. All the sandwiches were gone. She had to settle for a cup of yogurt.

Supply the conjunction that fits logically the meaning of the sentence. Tell what the relationship it expresses: cause, condition, purpose, and time.

1. _____ Jane wants to go with us, she must be ready to leave at ten o'clock.
2. _____ our holiday was a long one, we managed to do only half the things we had planned.
3. _____ I had read his latest book, I changed my opinion of him.
4. _____ many boys and girls do not know what to do after graduating, the guidance teachers help them to decide.
5. We stood in line all morning _____ we could get good seats for the game.
6. He said he would take the job _____ the pay was high enough.
7. _____ the train was freezing on the windshield, we had to stop frequently.
8. We will eat dinner at the hotel _____ you prefer some other place.

Join the statements in each group into one sentence in which the relationship between the subordinate clause and the main clause will be shown by a logical subordinating conjunction.

1. (a) He wanted to graduate in January.
(b) He could join the army.
2. (a) The committee members could not agree.
(b) The whole matter was referred to the president.
3. (a) Money is undoubtedly important.
(b) It has never made anyone happy.
- (4) (a) You train rigorously.
(b) You will be able to do well in cross-country.

Combine sentences in the following passages to coordinate related ideas in the ways that seem most effective to you. You will have to supply coordinating conjunctions or conjunctive adverbs and the appropriate punctuation.

1. Many chronic misspellers do not have the time to master spelling rules. They may not have the motivation. They may rely on dictionaries to catch misspellings. Most dictionaries list words under their correct spellings. One kind of dictionary is designed for chronic misspellers. It lists each word under its common *misspellings*. It then provides the correct spelling. It also provides the definition.
2. Henry Hudson was an English explorer. He captained ships for the Dutch East India Company. On a voyage in 1610 he passed by Greenland. He sailed into a great bay in today's northern Canada. He thought he and his sailors could winter there. The cold was terrible. Food ran out. The sailors mutinied. The sailors cast Hudson adrift in a small boat. Eight others were also in the boat. Hudson and his companions perished.

AVOIDING FAULTY COORDINATION AND SUBORDINATION

Each of the of the following sentences contains faulty coordination. Rewrite the sentences correctly using each method of correction at least twice.

1. I slowly climbed to the lookout point and reaching the top provided me with a spectacular view.
2. The car is dented and it has room for six.
3. We watched a special on naturalist John James Audubon and the organization dedicated to birds is named after him.
4. The diesel truck had a full load and it slowed down going up the grade.
5. We turned on the television and a commercial promptly showed up and I turned the channel looking for something better and commercials were on wherever I turned.
6. Evan has a new wool pullover and he plans to wear it to the beach where the wind can turn very cold.
7. Tammy walked on her sprained ankle and the ankle started to swell again.
8. Rocky Bleir received a serious injury in Vietnam and he came back to play football for the Pittsburgh Steelers.
9. Some terminally-ill people wish to be frozen, and this is the science of cryogenics.
10. The crowds to see the movie were enormous and we even ordered tickets prior to going, and unfortunately, we still sat near the screen and came away with kinks in our necks.

Combine each set of sentences, using coordination or subordination wherever possible. Check each of your combined sentences for faulty coordination.

1. I lost the gold charm. It had been a gift from my father.
2. Daydreams invade the waking hours. Nightmares haunt the darkness.
3. Millions of bats inhabit one particular cave. Each night, they journey to a lake over a hundred miles away.
4. I enjoy thumbing through encyclopaedias. They contain fascinating articles.
5. The ice was inadvertently left out. It melted all over the countertop.
6. The handbook had a soft cloth cover. Inside, it was filled with clever ideas and shortcuts for household tasks.
7. The shepherds huddled near the fire, the only source of warmth on the lonely hill. Their dogs lay snuggled against their masters' legs.
8. I use a knapsack for daylong hike. I switch to a backpack for longer excursions.
9. Prehistoric beasts once walked this land. Today, we study fossils from that period.
10. I told the obnoxious man to stop talking during the movie. Next, I asked the management to remove him. They obliged me. The man was escorted from the theatre, still talking loudly.

Correct the over subordination in each sentence by leaving out unnecessary details, by changing clauses into phrases or single words, or by breaking the sentence into two or more sentences. Read your sentences aloud to make sure they sound natural.

1. After he left university he taught school in Winnipeg, where he met Shana West, who became his wife.
2. Over there is the lady who feeds the pigeons nuts which she buys from the vending machine that stands in the lobby.
3. Here is a book which was written by Helen MacInnes, who has written all those fabulous cloak-and-dagger stories that are about spies and ladies who are in distress.
4. While they were at Camp Centennial, the scouts decided to go on an overnight hike and, after they got permission from Pat Brown, who was their scouter and who was a lawyer back home, they started out for Kenesaw Mountain, which was a rugged peak that was in a valley which lay about five kilometers from camp.