

Coordination: The Compound Sentence Patterns

Method 1: Coordinating Conjunctions:

for
and
nor
but
or
yet
so

- It is important to remember all seven conjunctions; an easy way to memorize them is the nonsense word “fanboys.”
- When you join two or more sentences (independent clauses) using a coordinating conjunction, you must place a comma before the conjunction:
*Sue ran to the store, **and** she bought a gallon of milk.*
- You must not place a comma before a coordinating conjunction if it is not joining two independent clauses:
*Sue ran to the store **and** bought a gallon of milk.*

Method 2: Semicolon:

- All semicolons ever do is join independent clauses:
Sue ran to the store; she bought a gallon of milk.
- Do not capitalize the first letter of the first word after a semicolon unless it is a proper noun (a proper name).

Method 3: Semicolon, Comma, **and** a Conjunctive Adverb:

- The most frequently used conjunctive adverbs are:
consequently, furthermore, however, indeed, in fact, moreover, nevertheless, then, therefore
 but there are even more conjunctive adverbs you will discover as you start using them in your writing.
- There is a very distinctive punctuation pattern used when conjunctive adverbs join independent clauses:
*Sue ran to the store; **then,** she bought a gallon of milk.*
- It is important to memorize the most common conjunctive adverbs and not to confuse them with the coordinating conjunctions. Conjunctive adverbs are not conjunctions; that is why the semicolon and comma are used with them. The order of the punctuation pattern is essential: the semicolon goes before the conjunctive adverb and a comma comes after the conjunctive adverb. Finally, remember not to capitalize the conjunctive adverb when it is joining independent clauses because it is not a proper noun.

Associated terms:

Independent clause: an independent clause is a group of words that includes a subject, a complete verb, and is a complete thought. It can stand alone, *independently*, and make sense. Other terms that are used that mean the same thing as “independent clause” are *sentence, main clause, complete idea, and complete thought*:

Independent clause= sentence= main clause= complete idea= complete thought.