

Joining Words, Phrases, and Clauses

There are, grammatically, a number of ways that words and ideas can be joined. Note that conjunctive adverbs, also referred to as sentence connectors, (see the grey boxes in all the tables) are the only class of connector that take the semi-colon. They also, therefore, may be used to begin a second sentence instead of using the semi-colon. The fourth category, prepositional phrases, cannot be used to join independent clauses.

To Show Addition

Type of Connector	Connector(s)	Examples
Coordinating Conjunction	and	Doctors prescribe steroids to treat various conditions, and athletes use them illegally to enhance performance.
Conjunctive adverbs	in addition, additionally, furthermore, moreover, also	Doctors prescribe steroids to treat various conditions; furthermore , athletes use them illegally to enhance performance
Correlative conjunctions	not only...but also	Not only do doctors prescribe steroids to treat various conditions, but athletes use them illegally to enhance performance.
Prepositional phrases*	in addition to, along with, as well as	<i>These can be rather tricky to use properly; see examples below</i>

Correct: **In addition to** their use in treating asthma, steroids are employed to treat multiple sclerosis.

Correct: Steroids are used to treat asthma **as well as** multiple sclerosis.

Correct: Steroids are used by patients to treat various conditions **as well as** by athletes to enhance their performance.

Not correct: Doctors prescribe steroids to treat various conditions **as well as** athletes use them to enhance their performance.

To Show Opposition

Type of Connector	Connector(s)	Examples
Coordinating conjunction	but	Doctors prescribe steroids legally to treat various conditions, but athletes use them illegally to enhance performance.
Subordinating conjunctions	although, despite the fact that/in spite of the fact that	Despite the fact that steroids are legal only when used to treat various medical conditions, athletes use them to enhance performance.
Conjunctive adverbs	however, nevertheless	Steroids are legal only when used to treat various medical conditions; nevertheless , athletes use them to enhance performance.
Prepositional phrases*	Despite, in spite of	In spite of their being legal only when used to treat various medical conditions, steroids are used by athletes to enhance their performance..

To Show Cause / Effect

Type of Connector	Connector(s)	Examples
Coordinating conjunctions	for (cause), so (effect)	<i>Steroids are illegal except for medical use, for they are powerful drugs with powerful side effects.</i>
Subordinating conjunctions	because, since, as	<i>Since steroids are powerful drugs with powerful side effects, they are illegal except for medical use.</i>
Conjunctive adverbs	therefore, as a result, consequently	<i>Steroids are powerful drugs with powerful side effects; therefore, they are illegal except for medical use.</i>
Preposition*	because of, due to (the fact that), as a result of	<i>Due to their being powerful drugs with powerful side effects, steroids are illegal except for medical use.</i>

To Show Comparison

Type of Connector	Connector(s)	Examples
Coordinating Conjunction	and...too	<i>Steroids are used to treat asthma, and they are used for multiple sclerosis, too.</i>
Subordinating conjunction	just as	<i>Just as steroids are useful in treating asthma, they are beneficial for multiple sclerosis.</i>
Conjunctive adverbs	similarly, in comparison	<i>Steroids are useful in treating asthma; similarly, they are beneficial for asthma.</i>
Prepositions	like, similar to	<i>Similar to asthma, multiple sclerosis treatment involves the use of steroids.</i>

To Show Contrast

Type of Connector	Connector(s)	Examples
Coordinating conjunction	but	<i>Steroids are legal for medical use but illegal for enhancing athletic performance.</i>
Subordinating conjunctions	whereas, while	<i>While steroids are legal for medical use, they are illegal for enhancing athletic performance.</i>
Conjunctive adverbs	in contrast, on the other hand	<i>Steroids are legal for medical use; on the other hand, they are illegal when used for enhancing athletic performance.</i>
Prepositions	unlike	<i>Unlike the legal use of steroids for medical purposes, the use of steroids for enhancing athletic performance is illegal.</i>

To Show Condition

Type of Connector	Connector(s)	Examples
Subordinating conjunctions	if, unless, only if, even if	<i>If athletes use steroids for enhancing their athletic performance, they may end up in prison.</i>
Conjunctive adverb	otherwise	<i>The use of steroids is confined to medical purposes only; otherwise, they are illegal.</i>