

Combining Sentences Using Coordinating Words: Explanation

One common way to connect sentences is by using a link made up of a comma and a coordinating word:

Two sentences:

The ship anchored outside the reef. We went ashore in boats.

Combined sentences (linked with **, and**):

The ship anchored outside the reef, **and** we went ashore in boats.

Here are the six main coordinating words. Notice that each of them sets up a different relationship between the sentences it joins:

And Shows addition or sequence:

The dancer hobbled offstage, **and** the curtain quickly descended.

Or Shows an alternative:

We can refuse to negotiate, **or** we can insist upon impossible terms.

But Shows simple contrast:

She hates lima beans, **but** I love them.

Yet Shows unexpected contrast:

She hates lima beans, **yet** she eats them for nutrients.

- For** Shows for what reason; its function is similar to because:
We stopped to take a compass bearing, **for** we were uncertain of our location.
- So** Shows consequence or result; its function is similar to therefore:
We were uncertain of our location, **so** we stopped to take a compass bearing.