

# Coordinate Conjunctions

## ACTIVITY TYPE

Reading, Writing, Grammar,  
Exercises

## LANGUAGE FOCUS

Coordinate conjunctions

## AIM

To learn and practice coordinate  
conjunctions in English

## LEVEL

Intermediate, Pre-Advanced,

## TIME

## INTRODUCTION

After going through your regular review and teacher talk, tell the students that they're going to learn the use of **coordinate conjunctions** in English

## PREPARATION

Make one copy of the worksheet for each student

## PROCEDURE

Give one copy of the worksheet to each student.  
Go through the grammar and exercises together.

## Coordinate conjunctions

Coordinate conjunctions are used to join two similar grammatical constructions; for instance, two words, two phrases or two clauses.

e.g. My friend and I will attend the meeting.

Austria is famous for the beauty of its landscape and the hospitality of its people.

The sun rose and the birds began to sing.

In these examples, the coordinate conjunction and is used to join the two words friend and I, the two phrases the beauty of its landscape and the hospitality of its people, and the two clauses the sun rose and the birds began to sing.

The most commonly used coordinate conjunctions are and, but and or. In addition, the words nor and yet may be used as coordinate conjunctions. In the following table, each coordinate conjunction is followed by its meaning and an example of its use. Note the use of inverted word order in the clause beginning with nor.

## Coordinate Conjunctions

and: in addition	She tried and succeeded.
but: however	They tried but did not succeed.
or: alternatively	Did you go out or stay at home?
nor: and neither	I did not see it, nor did they.
yet: however	The sun is warm, yet the air is cool.

As illustrated above, when a coordinate conjunction joins two verbs which have the same subject, the subject need not be repeated. For instance, in the example she tried and succeeded, the pronoun she acts as the subject for both the verb tried and the verb succeeded. It should also be noted that when a coordinate conjunction joins two verbs which do not have the same subject, the two coordinate clauses may be separated by a comma or semicolon, in order to make the meaning clear.

## Exercise

*Paying attention to the meanings of the sentences, and to the presence of inverted word order, fill in the blanks with the correct coordinate conjunctions chosen from the pairs given in brackets. For example:*

I would like to come, \_\_\_ I do not have time. (but, nor)

I would like to come, but I do not have time.

He has not written, \_\_\_ has he called me. (but, nor)

He has not written, nor has he called me.

1. I opened the door \_\_\_\_\_ looked out. (and, yet)

2. She was not in the back yard, \_\_\_\_\_ was she upstairs. (or, nor)

3. The sun had set, \_\_\_\_\_ it was still light outside. (or, yet)

4. Do you know his address \_\_\_\_\_ telephone number? (but, or)

5. He has not arrived yet, \_\_\_\_\_ have they. (and, nor)

6. I read the book, \_\_\_\_\_ did not understand it. (but, or)

7. We searched diligently, \_\_\_\_\_ found nothing. (or, yet)

8. I invited him \_\_\_\_\_ his friends. (and, but)

## Correlative conjunctions

Correlative conjunctions are used in pairs, in order to show the relationship between the ideas expressed in different parts of a sentence. For instance, in the following example, the expression *either ... or* is used to indicate that the ideas expressed in the two clauses represent two alternative choices of action.

e.g. *Either you should study harder, or you should take a different course.*

The most commonly used correlative conjunctions are *both ... and*, *either ... or* and *neither ... nor*. In the table below, each pair of correlative conjunctions is accompanied by an example of its use. Note that in the construction *if ... then*, the word *then* can usually be omitted.

### Correlative Conjunctions

<i>both ... and</i>	<i>He is both intelligent and good-natured.</i>
<i>either ... or</i>	<i>I will either go for a walk or read a book.</i>
<i>neither ... nor</i>	<i>He is neither rich nor famous.</i>
<i>hardly ... when</i>	<i>He had hardly begun to work, when he was interrupted.</i>
<i>if ... then</i>	<i>If that is true, then what happened is not surprising.</i>

no sooner ... than No sooner had I reached the corner, than the bus came.

not only ... but  
also She is not only clever, but also hard-working.

rather ... than I would rather go swimming than go to the library.

scarcely ... when Scarcely had we left home, when it started to rain.

what with ... and What with all her aunts, uncles and cousins, she has many relatives.

whether ... or Have you decided whether you will come or not?

## Exercise

*Paying attention to the expressions used in the following sentences, fill in the blanks with the words and, but also, nor, or, than, then and when, as appropriate. For example:*

We should either walk quickly    take the bus.

We should either walk quickly or take the bus.

I had scarcely sat down    the telephone rang.

I had scarcely sat down when the telephone rang.

1. I have both respect \_\_\_\_\_ admiration for them.
2. Hardly had I finished reading over the problem, \_\_\_\_\_ the answer leapt to my mind.
3. It will rain either today \_\_\_\_\_ tomorrow.
4. He could not decide whether to tell the truth \_\_\_\_\_ keep silent.
5. It was not only a beautiful day, \_\_\_\_\_ the first day of Spring.
6. If you follow the instructions, \_\_\_\_\_ you should have no difficulty.
7. He is neither proud \_\_\_\_\_ condescending.
8. What with one thing \_\_\_\_\_ another, it was very late by the time we left the house.
9. No sooner had I opened my eyes, \_\_\_\_\_ I remembered where I was.
10. Scarcely had I heard the news, \_\_\_\_\_ my friend arrived.
11. I do not know whether he has seen the movie before \_\_\_\_\_ not.
12. I would rather wait here \_\_\_\_\_ risk missing the bus.
13. She could find the book neither at the Library, \_\_\_\_\_ at the bookstore.
14. No sooner had I opened the window, \_\_\_\_\_ a butterfly flew into the room.
15. The crowd was both large \_\_\_\_\_ enthusiastic.