

Coordinating Conjunction Definition and Examples

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A *coordinating conjunction* is a [conjunction](#) (such as *and*) that joins two similarly constructed and/or syntactically equal [words](#), [phrases](#), or [clauses](#) within a sentence. Also called a *coordinator*.

The coordinating conjunctions in English are *and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *so*, *yet*. Compare with [subordinating conjunctions](#).

In some cases, as shown below, a coordinating conjunction may be used as a [transition](#) at the beginning of a new sentence.

Examples

- "All the long way to school
And all the way back,
I've looked *and* I've looked
And I've kept careful track,
But all that I've noticed,
Except my own feet,
Was a horse *and* a wagon
On Mulberry Street."
(Dr. Seuss, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*. Vanguard, 1937)
enough to consider divorce; murder, yes, *but* divorce, never."
- "She must have been tired, *for* she fell asleep the moment she inclined her head."
(Nikos Kazantzakis, *Report to Greco*, 1965)
- "Man is the only animal that laughs *and* weeps, *for* he is the only animal that is struck with the difference between what things are, *and* what they might have been."(William Hazlitt)
- "In no other city does life seem such a perpetual balancing of debits *and* credits, of evils *and* virtues, as it does in New York. No other city seems so charming *yet* so crude, so civilized *yet* so uncouth."(Joseph Epstein, "You Take Manhattan," 1983)
- "She does not come here to worship *or* to pray, *but* she has a sense of rightness *and* ritual about being here, a sense of duty fulfilled, of some unstated covenant's renewal."
(Stephen King, *Rose Madder*, 1995)
- "It's a sad day when you find out that it's not accident *or* time *or* fortune *but* just yourself that kept things from you."
(Lillian Hellman, *Pentimento*, 1973)
- "I didn't know, *nor* did any of my family seem to know, that this medicinal leaf my grandma burned was marijuana."
(E.L. Doctorow, *World's Fair*, 1985)
- "The mind plays tricks on you. You play tricks back! It's like you're unraveling a big cable-knit sweater that someone keeps knitting *and* knitting *and* knitting *and* knitting *and* knitting *and* knitting."
(Pee Wee in *Pee-wee's Big Adventure*, 1985)
- "It's tough to stay married. My wife kisses the dog on the lips, *yet* she won't drink from my glass."(Rodney Dangerfield)

- "His ratty home under the pig trough was too chilly, so he fixed himself a cozy nest in the barn behind the grain bins."
(E.B. White, *Charlotte's Web*. Harper & Row, 1952)
- "You have the American dream! The American dream is to be born in the gutter *and* have nothing. Then to rise *and* have all the money in the world, *and* stick it in your ears *and* go 'PLBTLBTLBTLBTLBTL!' That's a pretty good dream."(Eddie Izzard)
- "They were not cordial to Negro patronage, unless you were a celebrity like Bojangles. So Harlem Negroes did not like the Cotton Club and never appreciated its Jim Crow policy in the very heart of their dark community. *Nor* did ordinary Negroes like the growing influx of whites toward Harlem after sundown . . ."
(Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea*, 1940)
- "As every teacher knows, the numerical mark changes the entire experience *and* meaning of learning. It introduces a fierce competition among students by providing sharply differentiated symbols of success *and* failure. Grading provides an 'objective' measure of human performance *and* creates the unshakable illusion that accurate calculations can be made of worthiness."
(Neil Postman, *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1992)

- **The Use of a Coordinating Conjunction at the Beginning of a Sentence**

- "I was welcome briefly. I compare it to being a bum on Thanksgiving Day. Do-gooders invite you to the shelter and give you a beautiful turkey dinner. *But* it's a Thursday-only deal. Don't come back on Friday."
(Saul Bellow, *More Die of Heartbreak*. William Morrow, 1987)

- "'Do you understand how there could be any writing in a spider's web?'

"'Oh, no,' said Dr. Dorian. 'I don't understand it. *But* for that matter I don't understand how a spider learned to spin a web in the first place. When the words appeared, everyone said they were a miracle. *But* nobody pointed out that the web itself is a miracle.'

"'What's miraculous about a spider's web?' said Mrs. Arable. 'I don't see why you say a web is a miracle--it's just a web.'

"'Ever try to spin one?' asked Dr. Dorian."
(E.B. White, *Charlotte's Web*. Harper & Row, 1952)

- *And* did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine,
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these dark Satanic Mills?
(William Blake, "Jerusalem." Preface to *Milton*, 1804-1810)

- "*And* at the beginning of a sentence? During the 19th century, some schoolteachers took against the practice of beginning a sentence with a word like *but* or *and*, presumably because they noticed the way young children often overused them in their writing. But instead of gently weaning the children away from overuse, they banned the usage altogether! Generations of children were taught they should 'never' begin a sentence with a conjunction. Some still are.

"There was never any authority behind this condemnation. It isn't one of the rules laid down by the first [prescriptive grammarians](#). Indeed, one of those grammarians, Bishop Lowth, uses dozens of examples of

sentences beginning with *and*. And in the 20th century, [Henry Fowler](#), in his famous *Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, went so far as to call it a 'superstition.' He was right. There are sentences starting with *And* that date back to Anglo-Saxon times."

(David Crystal, *The Story of English in 100 Words*. St. Martin's Press, 2012)

Pronunciation: ko-ORD-i-nate-ing kun-JUNK-shun

Also Known As: coordinator