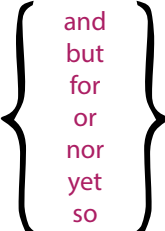
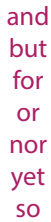


# Combining Independent and Dependent Clauses

According to the Purdue OWL, an independent clause is “a group of words that contains a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought.” A dependent clause is “a group of words that contains a subject and verb but does not express a complete thought.”

## Combining Two Independent Clauses

- Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction (connecting word) .

Independent clause,   independent clause.

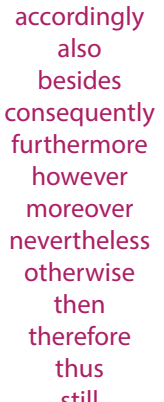
*Example: I was tired after working all day, **so** I decided to go to bed early.*

- Use a semicolon between two independent clauses with no coordinating conjunction.

Independent clause ; independent clause.

*Example: I was tired from working all day; I decided to go to bed early.*

- Use a semicolon before and a comma after the conjunctive adverbs (connecting words) listed below.

Independent clause;   , independent clause.

*Example: I was tired from working all day; **therefore**, I decided to go to bed early.*



## Combining Independent Clauses with Dependent Clauses

- When the dependent clause begins with a subordinating conjunction (connecting word) and precedes the independent clause, separate the clauses with a comma.

After  
Although  
Even though  
Though  
As  
As if  
As though  
As long as  
Because  
Before  
If  
So/So that  
Since  
Until  
Whatever  
When  
Whenever  
Where  
Wherever  
Whether  
While

### *dependent clause,*

*Subordinate clauses are dependent. They can't stand alone as complete sentences because they begin with a subordinating conjunction.*

### *independent clause.*

*Independent clauses can stand alone as complete sentences.*

Example: *Since I was tired, I decided to go to bed.*

- When the dependent (subordinate) clause follows the independent clause, don't use a comma before or after the subordinating conjunction (connecting word).

### *Independent clause*

*Independent clauses can stand alone as complete sentences.*

after  
although  
even though  
though  
as  
as if  
as though  
as long as  
because  
before  
if  
so/ so that  
since  
unless  
until  
whatever  
when  
whenever  
where  
wherever  
whether  
while

### *dependent clause.*

*Subordinate clauses are dependent. They can't stand alone as complete sentences because they begin with a subordinating conjunction.*

Example: *I decided to go to bed since I was tired.*