

Transitions connect the ideas in your writing. It is a common misconception that a transition's purpose is to make writing sound more ornate or sophisticated, but the real reason transitions are important is because without them, a logical progression of ideas is nearly impossible. Transitions link your ideas together, show how they are related, and allow readers to understand them better.

There are three different types of transitions:

1. **Transition paragraphs:**

- Summarize the content of the previous paragraph before moving on to a new one with a different point
- Good for long, complex essays
- Should also show how the previous paragraph's point is related to your thesis statement.

2. **Transitions between paragraphs:**

- Show a connection from one paragraph to the next
- Show how paragraphs are linked by summarizing the previous paragraph and showing how the main idea of the next paragraph is related
- Can be an entire sentence, a word, or a short phrase, and typically is placed in the first sentence of the next paragraph

3. **Transitions within paragraphs:**

- Used to move from one idea about the paragraph's main point to another
- Can also be used to link the main point to an example of the main point
- Can be one word or a short phrase – but is usually very brief

Transitions between the different ideas make your paper easier to follow. For example, you may transition between two organized paragraphs of an argumentative paper about the nature of pitbull dogs like this:

Paragraph X: [Reviews others' arguments supporting the view that pitbulls are not naturally violent.]

Transition (Last sentence of Paragraph X or first sentence of Paragraph Y): However, this argument does not take into account all of the evidence that pitbulls are confrontational and dangerous animals by nature.

Paragraph Y: [Arguments support the view that pitbulls are naturally violent.]

Here, the transition word "However" suggests to the reader that a different idea or set of ideas is about to be presented, thus making the relationship between the two different parts of your paper clear.

Common Transitional Words and Phrases

RELATIONSHIP/PURPOSE	TRANSITIONAL WORDS & PHRASES
Summary	in brief, in layman’s terms, in simpler terms, on the whole, in short, to summarize, in sum, to sum up, in summary, in final analysis, in fact
Conclusion	in conclusion, to conclude, finally
Compare	likewise, similarly, in the same way, in like manner, just as...so too
Contrast	although, though, however, on the other hand, whereas, but, unlike, nevertheless, conversely, on the contrary, contrary to common belief, in contrast, instead, counter to, still, in spite of, despite, even though, and yet
Adding or Expanding	also, in addition, furthermore, moreover, besides, as well, second, third, too, equally important
Indicating Purpose	for this purpose, to this end, with this aim
Qualifying	mostly, generally, usually, mainly, in most cases, probably, for the most part, typically, frequently, rarely, with few exceptions, by and large, some, sometimes
Conveying Result or Cause/Effect	therefore, hence, thus, consequently, as a result, due to, eventually, because of, accordingly, so
Specifying/Giving Examples	for example, for instance, to illustrate, in this case, in particular
Marking Place/Direction	there, here, opposite, nearby, close by, adjacent, beyond, in the distance, above, below
Relating Time	next, finally, recently, simultaneously, soon, then, after, afterward, currently, earlier, subsequently, meanwhile, after, later, firstly, first, the following day, in a little while, in the past, before, now, at present
Emphasis	indeed, to be sure, of course, without a doubt, understandably, it is true, clearly, evidently, obviously, of course, truly
Indicating Sequence/Order	next, then, finally, first, now, second, third