

Point A to Point B:

Creating Good Transitions in Writing

MRHS Research

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What is a Transition?

- ▣ Bridges parts of your paper together



- Helps you (the writer) carry over a thought from one sentence to another, from one idea to another, from one paragraph to another, or from one section to another with words or phrases
 - ▣ Guides the reader to interpret ideas the way you (as a writer) want them to

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What is a Transition?

- ▣ Transitions link sentences and paragraphs together smoothly....

- so there are no abrupt jumps between ideas which can really interrupt the flow of ideas and hurt the writing significantly; or so there are no
- breaks between ideas.



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Types of Transitions

There are several types of transitional devices; each leads your reader to make certain connections or assumptions about the areas you're connecting.

- Some lead reader forward to "build" on an idea or thought.
- Others make your reader compare or draw conclusions from preceding thoughts



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Types of Transitions



- A transition can be:
 - A single word
 - A phrase
 - A sentence
 - An entire paragraph

- All transitions function the same way → a transition either directly summarizes the content of a preceding sentence, section, etc., or it helps reader anticipate or comprehend NEW information that you're going to present .

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Transition Placement

- Between Paragraphs:
 - If you have done a good job of arranging paragraphs so that the content of one leads logically to the next, the transition will highlight a relationship that already exists by summarizing the previous paragraph and suggesting something of the content of the paragraph that follows.
 - A transition between paragraphs can be a word or two (*however, for example, similarly*), a phrase, or a sentence

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Transition Placement

- Within Paragraphs:
 - As with transitions between sections and paragraphs, transitions within paragraphs act as cues by helping readers to anticipate what is coming before they read it.
 - Within paragraphs, transitions tend to be single words or short phrases.

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Transitions Within Paragraphs:

- Topic Sentence:
 - The space shuttle Columbia marked the beginning of a new era in space.

- Supporting Sentences:
 - Early space explorations involved short flights into orbit and eventually to the moon.
 - Scientists were more concerned about whether such flights could be done at all, rather than about using space for new scientific research.
 - In the decade since the Columbia mission, we have begun examining the uses of space itself.

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Paragraph With Transitions:

- Note the Transitional Devices
 - The space shuttle Columbia marked the beginning of a new era in space. *In fact*, early space explorations involved short flights into orbit and eventually to the moon. *However*, scientists were more concerned about whether such flights could be done at all, rather than about using space for new scientific research. *Now*, in the decade since the Columbia mission, we have begun examining the uses of space itself.

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Transitions – To Add

- These words signify that you're elaborating on an idea in your writing:
 - And, again, and then, besides, equally important, finally, further, furthermore, nor, too, next, lastly, what's more, moreover, in addition, first (second, etc.)
- Example:
 - *Friends* is a television show about six friends. It shows how relationships are often complicated.
 - *Friends* is a television show about six friends. *Furthermore*, it shows how relationships are often complicated.

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Transitions – To Compare

- These words signify you're comparing a previous idea to a new one in your paper, or describing two different things:
 - Whereas, but, yet, on the other hand, however, nevertheless, on the other hand, on the contrary, by comparison, where, compared to, up against, balanced against, although, conversely, meanwhile, after all, in contrast, although this may be true...
- Example:
 - Ross and Rachel are dating. Ross and Monica are siblings.
 - Ross and Rachel are dating. *However*, Ross and Monica are siblings.

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Transitions – To Prove

- Use these words to indicate support for your argument:
 - Because, for, since, for the same reason, obviously, evidently, furthermore, moreover, besides, indeed, in fact, in addition, in any case, that is...
- Example:
 - Monica loves food. She is a chef.
 - Monica loves food. *In fact*, she is a chef.

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Transitions – To Show Exception

- These words help you move to an idea that counters an earlier idea
 - Yet, still, however, nevertheless, in spite of, despite, of course, once in a while, sometimes...
- Example:
 - Phoebe acts unintelligently. She has some of the smartest observations.
 - Phoebe acts unintelligently. *Yet*, she has some of the smartest observations.

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Transitions – To Show Time

- When telling events in a chronological sequence, these words help make the order clear:
 - Immediately, thereafter, soon, after a few hours, finally, then, later, previously, formerly, first (second, etc.), next, and then...
- Example:
 - Ross and Rachel get married. They get a divorce. They have a baby.
 - *First*, Ross and Rachel get married. *Soon after*, they get a divorce. *Then*, they have a baby.

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Transitions – To Repeat

- These types of transitional devices help remind the reader what you have mentioned before:
 - In brief, as I have said, as I have noted, as has been noted...
- Example:
 - Ross and Rachel have a crazy relationship.
 - *As has been shown*, Ross and Rachel have a crazy relationship.

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Transitions – To Emphasize

- Emphasis words do just that – serve to emphasize points that you want the reader to really be aware of and understand:
 - Definitely, extremely, obviously, in fact, indeed, in any case, absolutely, positively, naturally, surprisingly, always, forever, never, emphatically, unquestionably, without a doubt, certainly, undeniably, without reservation...
- Example:
 - Ross has been married three times. Ross likes to get married.
 - Ross has been married three times. *Obviously*, Ross likes to get married.

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Transitions – To Show Sequence or “Results”

- If there is no clear order or you’re writing that one idea causes another, use the following words:
 - First, second, third, and so forth, next, then, following this, at this time, now, at this point, after, afterward, subsequently, finally, consequently, previously, before this, simultaneously, concurrently, thus, therefore, hence, next, and then, soon...
- Example:
 - Joey went to film a movie in Las Vegas. Ross and Rachel got married.
 - Joey went to film a movie in Las Vegas. *At this time*, Ross and Rachel got married.

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Transitions – To Give an Example

- Words such as these clearly indicate when you’re giving an example to support yourself:
 - For example, for instance, in this case, in another case, on this occasion, in this situation, take the case of, to demonstrate, to illustrate, as an illustration...
- Example:
 - Joey does not share food. He will not even share with Emma, Rachel’s baby.
 - Joey does not share food. *For example*, he will not even share with Emma, Rachel’s baby.

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Transitions – To Summarize or Conclude

- When trying to summarize your points, using these words clearly signals your intent:
 - In brief, on the whole, summing up, to conclude, in conclusion, as I have shown, as I have said, hence, therefore, accordingly, thus, as a result, consequently, on the whole...
- Example:
 - *Friends* shows the lives of six friends. It shows how they interact with each other.
 - *Friends* shows the lives of six friends. *Consequently*, it shows how they interact with each other.

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Transitions: Repeating Key Words

- Transitions don’t always have to be one of these “signal” words; they can also be words that you have used before to remind the reader of what you are talking about
- Example:
 - *Friends* is about six friends who remain loyal to each other despite all of the issues that come up in their lives.
 - Because of the *loyalty* *Friends* portrays, many people are attracted to the show.

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