

Transitions

A good essay must use transitions within paragraphs and especially between paragraphs to preserve the logical flow of the essay. Without good transitions, the reader will struggle to get from one point to the next. Use transitions as bridges between your ideas. As you move from one paragraph to the next, you should not have to explain your story in addition to telling it. If the transitions between paragraphs require explanation, your essay is either too large in scope or the flow is not logical.

You should not have to think too much about how to construct transition sentences. If the concepts in your outline follow and build on one another naturally, transitions will write themselves.

To make sure that you are not forcing your transitions, try to refrain from using words such as, "however," "nevertheless," and "furthermore." If you are having trouble transitioning between paragraphs or are trying to force a transition onto a paragraph that has already been written, then this may indicate a problem with your overall structure. If this happens, go back to your original outline and make sure that you have assigned only one point to each paragraph, and that each point naturally follows the preceding one and leads to a logical conclusion.

If you are confident in your structure, but find yourself stuck on what might make a good transition, try repeating key words from the previous paragraph and progressing the idea. If that doesn't work, try this list of common transitions:

- Adding additional facts or information = as well, and, additionally, furthermore, also, too, in addition, another, besides, moreover.
- sequence of events = first of all, meanwhile, followed by, then, next, before, after, last, finally, one month later, one year later, etc.
- order of importance = first, second etc., next, last, finally, more importantly, more significantly, above all, primarily.
- connect one idea to a fact or illustration = for example, for instance, to illustrate, this can be seen.
- an effect or result = as a result, thus, consequently, eventually, therefore.
- To indicate that one idea is the opposite of another = nonetheless, however, yet, but, though, on the other hand, although, even though, in contrast, unlike, differing from, on the contrary, instead, whereas, nevertheless, despite, regardless of.
- comparing one thing to another = In a different sense, similarly, likewise, similar to, like, just as, conversely.

The transition into the conclusion is especially important. If it is not clear how you arrived at this final idea, you have either just force a conclusion into the outline, or your outline lacks focus.